"We are realists... we dream the impossible" - Che

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STOP LNG!

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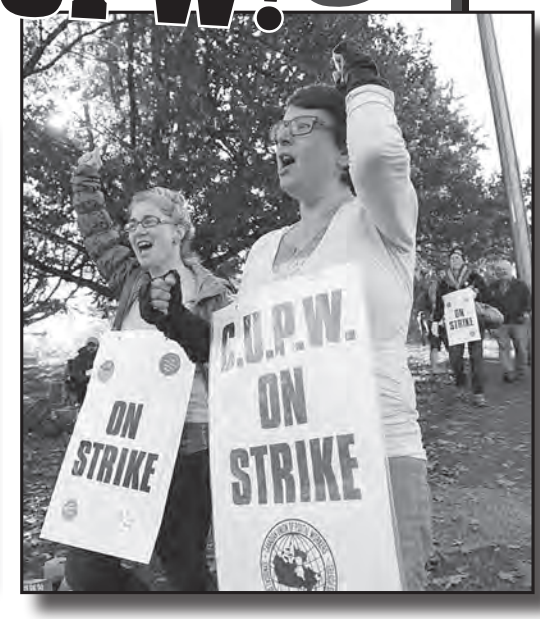
STAND WITH CUPW!

SUPPORT THE RIGHT TO STRIKE!

URGENT



By Alison Bodine

Loud chants of, "Workers rights are under attack - what do we do? Stand up! Fight back!" and, "Back to work - back to court!" rang out along the Broadway corridor in Vancouver on Saturday, December 1, 2018. The chants were the result of a rally called in support of postal workers in Canada, who have recently been legislated back to work by the government following five weeks of rotating strike actions.

> **"Today was to support the postal workers who have been legislated back to work, which is dictatorship rule in my books."**
>
> - Raymond, a forcibly retired letter carrier, on a medical retirement.

Following the dynamic rally, which was held in front of the office of Liberal MP Jody Wilson-Raybould, postal workers and their supporters marched to a public meeting being held by Liberal MP Joyce Murray. When Joyce Murray arrived, she was greeted with chants of, "Hey Joyce – it's your choice! Respect workers rights!" and, "Hey Joyce, you're late! Negotiate, don't legislate!" and was forced into talking to the protestors before continuing into her meeting.

The December 1 action in Vancouver was one of 31 actions happening across Canada that day from coast-to-coast, organized by the Delivering Community Power campaign, and endorsed by numerous unions, civil society organizations and community groups. These actions brought thousands of people to the streets in defence of not only the Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW) members, but also of the right to collectively bargain and the right to strike of all unions and workers in Canada.

Why Are the Postal Workers on Strike?

50,000 postal workers in Canada have been working for one-year without a contract with Canada Post, as they worked to negotiate a new collective agreement for both the Urban Postal Operations and Rural and Suburban Mail Carriers (RSMC) workers. When it was clear that Canada Post was not listening to any of their demands and had stopped negotiating, postal workers began rotating strikes to pressure Canada Post to negotiate for a collective agreement.

Any working person in Canada today can identify with the demands of the postal workers: better pay, equal pay between sectors, job security, and a workplace free from injury. For example, today, postal workers are the most injured Federal sector workers in Canada – with an injury rate that is 4.6 higher than average as reported by Labour Canada. CUPW is also demanding an end to compulsory overtime and better conditions for part-time and precarious workers.

> **"We want our rights protected and we want the right to freely bargain with our employer."**
>
> - Emily, a postal worker in Fraser Valley West.

Canada Post is a powerful and profitable corporation, and there should be no

question that postal workers should be given well paying, dignified and safe work. However, as the profits of Canada Post go up, especially due to the increase in small package deliveries and advertising mail, workers pay, and job security has gone down, and the loads that there are expected to carry have only increased.

Back-to-work Legislation – What Happened to Workers Rights?

On Monday, November 26, Back-to-work legislation, in the form of Bill C-89, was passed by the Canadian government and made into law. This legislation makes the CUPW strike illegal, essentially ordering postal workers back to the job.

Fire This Time organisers standing in solidarity with CUPW at the Vancouver rally in support of postal workers, December 1, 2018.

This type of repressive legislation has been used by the government of Canada, and Provincial governments many times since 1950 when it was imposed on striking railway workers. It effectively annuls the rights of workers to strike. Why go on strike at all when the government can order you back to work? Why would any corporation, such as Canada Post, ever negotiate if they could rely on the government to end the strike? Back-to-work legislation destroys the fundamental democratic rights of workers!

> **"I see this as not just a fight for postal workers, but for all workers rights, including collective bargaining. Things that are in our Charter of Rights and Freedoms."**
>
> - Norine, letter carrier.

The right to collectively bargain and strike is not only a fundamental right of all working people, it has also been held up in International Labour Law, and by the Supreme Court of Canada, which ruled in 2016 that that right to strike is a fundamental constitutional right, protected under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. In fact, this same tactic was used by the Harper government against the postal workers in 2011. The Back-to-work legislation imposed then was ruled unconstitutional by the Supreme Court of Canada in 2016.

So, why is the government of Canada trying the same anti-democratic maneuvers? As the economy of Canada faces a deeper crisis, the resulting austerity measures mean that poor, working, and oppressed people in Canada will come under increasing attack by the government. Back-to-work legislation that strips working people of their rights also sends a chill to all people and organizations fighting for human, civil and democratic rights.

Postal workers in Agassiz, BC, on strike. October 29, 2018.

> **"We should have never been legislated back. The first chance that Justin Trudeau had he used it, and it is not right. We are standing up, we are fighting back."**
>
> - Emily, a postal worker in Fraser Valley West.

Postal Workers Continue to Fight for Their Rights!

The Back-to-work legislation has not deterred the postal workers from fighting for their rights. Although they have been forced back to work, they are continuing to organize. Just listen to James Hutt, from the Delivering Community Power Campaign, speaking outside of an event with MP Joyce Murray during the December 1 action in Vancouver:

Postal workers on the picket line in downtown Chilliwack, BC. October 29, 2018.

"We are here to say that you can't pretend to be a feminist government when forcing women to work for free. We are here to say that you can't pretend to be against climate change when the postal workers have put forward the best climate action plan. We are here to say to you that you can work with us or you can fight the 50,000 postal workers across the country and their thousands of allies. On four days notice, we called a day of action, and there are 31 rallies across this country; all the way from Alert Bay over to the Atlantic, from big towns like Vancouver to Thompson, Manitoba and The Pas, Manitoba.

Thousands and thousands of Canadians have stood up to say to postal workers that I support them, I support their Delivering Community Power vision, and I stand for the right to strike! We will not stand for any politician of any colour that tramples on workers rights!

Postal workers have a proud history of fighting for broad social change in this country. In 1981, they went on strike for 41 days to win paid maternity leave. Today it is the norm in this country. Now they are going on strike for gender equality and defending our jobs, the jobs which this government says they want. They are going on strike for climate action and services for seniors."

Importance of Solidarity and Unity

When the Trudeau Liberal government began to prepare to use back-to-work legislation, they also began to attempt to turn poor and working people against postal workers – claiming that there was a large and important back-log of mail – 1 million parcels! The President of CUPW, Mike Palecek, responded to this manipulative lie with the simple response, "We call that Monday," referring to the number of parcels often processed by postal workers daily.

As poor, working and oppressed people in Canada we must not be fooled by the tricks of the government of Canada to take away our rights. Postal workers going on strike isn't an inconvenience – its workers exercising their fundamental rights and fighting for a dignified life. The right to collectively organize, to have a union and the right to strike must be defended.

Now, that postal workers have been legislated back to work, this fight for CUPW's right to strike is not only for the postal workers, but it is also a fight in defence of the democratic rights of all working people in Canada. All unions across Canada must stand in defence of the right to strike and against this backwards legislation. If poor, working and oppressed people across Canada unite we can dismantle Back-to-work legislation, and win a victory for postal workers, and all workers!

Let's unite and fight against this mockery of democracy – let's dismantle the Back-to-work legislation!

To follow the Delivering Community Power campaign, and sign a petition against the Back-to-work legislation, Bill C-89 visit:
http://www.deliveringcommunitypower.ca/

►►At the December 1 rally held in Vancouver, Fire This Time Newspaper had the opportunity to interview a few of the CUPW striking postal workers that have been out on the line. What follows are some of their thoughts.

Fire This Time: What brings you to the the rally here today?

"Today was to support the postal workers who have been legislated back to work, which is dictatorship rule in my books. I come from the old country, and this is wrong, you can't get that away from the working class. All these people here are here to support us, and it is only going to get bigger and bigger."

– Raymond, a forcibly retired letter carrier, on a medical retirement.

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Postal workers on Strike in Fort Erie, ON. November 5, 2018.

HANDS OFF YEMEN!

LET'S BUILD AN EFFECTIVE OPPOSITION TO THE WAR AND DESTRUCTION IN YEMEN

By Azza Rojbi

Speech delivered at the November 30, 2018, public forum organized by Mobilization Against War and Occupation (MAWO). An excerpt.

What I want to talk about for a bit is the role of the United States, which I think was very clear in the video we watched of Trump in his meeting with the Saudi crown prince in Washington. How he put out his props and signs showing off the U.S. arms deal with Saudi Arabia. The video looked ridiculous. It looked like a joke, but it's real. Those are not only numbers and pictures, but they're actual bombs and weapons that Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates are using against the people of Yemen.

One example is the video we watched of the bombing of the bus full of school children on a field trip in Yemen's Saada province, 51 people were killed, 40 of them children aged from 6 to 11. CNN reported that the bomb used in this atrocious attack "was a 500-pound (227 kilograms) laser-guided MK 82 bomb made by Lockheed Martin, one of the top US defence contractors." This is just one example of the use of U.S. made bombs against the people of Yemen.

Another important point to share is that the United States is not only providing logistical support, selling bombs and refueling the coalition fighter jets but also the New York Times reported that a team of U.S. Army special elite forces called "Green Berets" were secretly deployed to the border between Saudi Arabia and Yemen and they're working closely with Saudi Arabia's military.

"between 2015 and 2017 Canada has sold over $735 million of military goods to Saudi Arabia ."

In addition to the U.S., we need to highlight the role of Canada in the war on Yemen. As somebody that lives in Canada it is really important to talk about what this government is doing and its role in this atrocious war. Canada tries to portray itself as a country that cares about peace and humanitarian causes by only highlighting its humanitarian aid to Yemen. But they are purposely deceiving people by avoiding talking about Canada's massive weapons sells to Saudi Arabia and the UAE. I have a few facts that I want to share with you on this because I think it is important that we all challenge the misconceptions about Canada's role in the war on Yemen.

Through research on the website of the

Canadian government, you can learn a lot about its involvement with Saudi Arabia, the information is there, but the government and the mainstream media don't want to talk about it. An important fact I learned is that in 2011, Royal Saudi Air Force pilots were trained by the NATO Flying Training in Canada (NFTC) program at military facilities in Saskatchewan and Alberta. They were being trained by the Canadian Forces and a company called CAE Inc., which is a Montreal based flight simulator company. The same Canadian company also has a training facility in Saudi Arabia and two in the UAE. Let's think about this, in 2011 Saudi Air Force Pilots were trained in Canada, what do you think those Saudi military pilots are doing now? They are flying and bombing missions over Yemen as we speak.

The other important information to know about Canada is that between 2015 and 2017 Canada sold over $735 million of military goods to Saudi Arabia, according to Canada's annual "Report on the Export of Military Goods." When you look at the reports, you look at the numbers; you notice that since the start of the war on Yemen in 2015, every year Canada is selling more weapons and military goods to Saudi Arabia. After the U.S., Saudi Arabia is the second largest buyer of Canadian made military goods. CTV News reported that, "In 2017, the kingdom accounted for 48 percent of Canada's military goods and technology exports."

Also, the Trudeau Liberal government is going ahead with the $15 billion arms sale to supply Saudi Arabia with light-armoured vehicles (LAV). Trudeau called them "jeeps," but as you can see in the picture behind me those are not jeeps, they are military vehicles equipped with heavy guns and cannon. That is a war vehicle, not a car! The Liberal government and Trudeau are trying to convince us that they can't afford to cancel this arms deal as it might cost $1 billion to do so. This is the same government that bought a failing unpopular pipeline project for 4.5 billion dollars. I believe Prime Minister Trudeau needs some classes in humanity and math!

I want to share a quote from the Toronto Star, because I think it's important when the mainstream media in Canada does honest good reporting. The quote is from an interview with Anthony Fenton, an academic who follows Canada's arms exports to the Middle East, "There is not a shred of doubt Canadian equipment is being used in Yemen…We track this on a daily basis, and there hasn't been a week since this war began that there hasn't been some sighting of Canadian goods being used."

As we have seen in the videos, the U.S. and Canada are not alone in their complicity in the war on Yemen. Germany, France, Italy, Spain and the UK have all been selling weapons to Saudi Arabia. The U.K. has also been providing training and targeting assistance to the Saudi military while French special forces are reported to be assisting UAE forces fighting inside Yemen.

Do Imperialists Care?

We have noticed recently an increase of media coverage on the war on Yemen and the case of the brutally murdered journalist Jamal Khashoggi. It might seem that the U.S., Canada and their imperialist allies have suddenly gained conscience and opened their hearts to the plight of the Yemeni people. Suddenly now they are talking about a ceasefire and ending the war. Let's examine how real that is. To be honest with you, I think it is another deceiving tactic.

On October 30, 2018, the United States government started their media campaign talking about a ceasefire in Yemen. On that day, U.S. Defense Secretary James Mattis said, "Thirty days from now we want to see everybody around a peace table based on a ceasefire." Later that afternoon, Secretary of State Pompeo said, "The United States calls on all parties to support UN Special Envoy Martin Griffiths in finding a peaceful solution to the conflict in Yemen." Shortly, similar statements came out from the Canadian government and some Europeans countries calling for a

Donald Trump holds a chart with U.S. arms sales to Saudi Arabia at his meeting with Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman in Washington, DC. March 20, 2018.

Scouts carry the coffin of a boy at a mass funeral for people killed in a Saudi-led coalition air strike on a school bus in Saada, Yemen, on August 13, 2018.

30 day ceasefire in Yemen.

Today is November 30, so let's see what had happened since. No peace or ceasefire is in sight in Yemen! This is not the first time we heard the demand of ceasefire and peace negotiations, imperialists have been using it as a deceptive tactic to win more time for Saudi Arabia to gain ground in Yemen, to win more time for them to be in a better position. So that if there were negotiations, Saudi Arabia and the United States will be in a stronger position because they have not been able to quash the resistance in Yemen. The same day that they started their talks about a ceasefire, Saudi Arabia was bombing Yemen's capital Sana'a. This proofs their utmost hypocrisy.

Pretending to work towards peace and a ceasefire in Yemen is also a good strategy by imperialists to counter the growing questioning and opposition to the war. They want to confuse people and demobilize them from organizing against the war by claiming that they will work to bring peace to Yemen - so why would we still oppose their actions? The bottom line is that they are saying to trust them to bring this war to a peaceful solution. Can we trust them? Let's find out.

It has been over 30 days since the U.S. and their imperialist allies announced their call for a ceasefire, Yemen is still being blockaded and bombed by the Saudi-led coalition every day. People are still being killed every day. There is no ceasefire; there is nothing close to a ceasefire. Even the mainstream imperialist media admits to that, CNN published an article on November 27 titled "U.S. 'slams the break' on UN Yemen ceasefire resolution." They never had the intention of pursuing a real ceasefire in the first place. They just wanted their stooges to gain more time and territory in Yemen.

A severely malnourished boy in a hospital bed at the Aslam Health Center in Hajjah, Yemen.

Another recent update that came up in the media is that a majority of Senators in the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee voted in favour of advancing a resolution to end U.S. military support for the Saudi-led coalition in Yemen. Although this is a good development, it doesn't mean much concretely as it is only at the committee level and it has a very low chance to pass through Congress. Even if this resolution passes through the hurdles of Congress, Trump has already released a "statement of administration policy" in which he vows that he will veto it.

Why the War on Yemen?

The Saudi-led coalition started its war on Yemen in 2015. Saudi Arabia claimed that they were going to bring back stability and legitimacy to the country and the whole region. I think it is really clear to everybody that there is no such stability or peace in Yemen or the region today. Actually the situation is even worse.

There is no way that Saudi Arabia or the UAE could have started this war alone. It is important to look at who is behind this humanitarian tragedy in Yemen. The war on people of Yemen was planned and created by the U.S. and its imperialist allies and then implemented through their Saudi & UAE puppets and their coalition.

The U.S. and their imperialist allies are using war and occupation to control the Middle East countries and force them to succumb to their hegemony. They can't afford the possibility of an independent sovereign Yemen. They need another puppet government in the region to serve the interests of the United States and all their imperialist allies.

They are doing to Yemen the same thing they have been doing to Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya, Syria, Iran, Venezuela, and Cuba, to name a few. In this new era of war and occupation, which started with the occupation of Afghanistan in 2001, the U.S. and their imperialist allies have imposed wars, occupations, sanctions and blockades to break the will of sovereign nations and force independent countries to accept imperialist dictated plans and domination.

Another important point I wanted to address is how, in all reporting of the war on Yemen, the mainstream media finds an opportunity to blame Iran for the crisis. They have the word "Iran" in the video probably more than

Continued on page 29

infographic from BBC

7 BIG REASONS the BC Government's Approval of the LNG Canada Project is a Catastrophe in the Making

By Thomas Davies

Whichever corporate advertising firm decided to put the word "Natural" in the name "Liquified Natural Gas" (LNG) unfortunately deserves an award. In these days when many politicians are more concerned with appearing as though they are addressing the emerging climate crisis rather than confronting it – an alternative "natural" fuel sounds like a great idea! Unfortunately, this is far from reality. LNG is still a dirty fossil fuel that relies on destroying the environment to be produced, transported and utilized. What's worse, the BC government is trying to subsidize the same corporations who have already been in the driver's seat of ruining the planet to do this in B.C. There are a lot of reasons to oppose the new LNG Canada mega-project, but below are seven of the most important.

To recap, here are the basics:

The BC New Democratic Party (BC NDP) government recently approved a 40 billion dollar LNG Canada liquefied natural-gas project. The LNG Canada project will see a pipeline carrying natural gas from Dawson Creek in northeastern BC to a new processing plant on the coast in Kitimat. There, the gas would be liquefied for overseas export. BC NDP Premier John Horgan could hardly contain his enthusiasm at the press conference, "Today LNG Canada has sent a signal to the world that British Columbia and Canada are open for business," the BC Premier said. "I can't tell you how proud I am. I can't stop smiling."

1. Huge Climate Hit

As Fire This Time reported last month, "Most indicting of the terrible hypocrisy involved in approving the LNG project: both LNG Canada and the Trans Mountain Pipeline Expansion have a similar overall greenhouse gas footprint during their lifetime. One hundred million tons of carbon dioxide equivalent for LNG Canada and 120 million tonnes for Trans Mountain - when considering extraction, transportation, processing and burning in other nations after export.

The NDP had previously committed to reducing provincial greenhouse gases by 40 percent by 2030 and 80 percent by 2050. They provided no information for how this LNG development could take place and still meet those commitments. It would require taking every gas-powered vehicle off the road to offset the new greenhouse gas emission.

This decision also came after global warming aggravated wildfires in BC have burned more than 1.2 million hectares of the province, eight times more than the 10-year-average."

It's true that natural gas releases less carbon dioxide emissions than coal, but that's not the full story. Beyond the carbon emissions, LNG is made up mostly of methane, a super-potent greenhouse gas. It's impossible to stop leaks from happening, and as National Public Radio's Nathan Rott described, "It can warm the atmosphere at nearly 30 times the rate of carbon dioxide."

2. Fracking = Destruction

Dr. Margaret McGregor, MD, CCFP, MHSc, a member of the Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment (CAPE), wrote an excellent article in the National Observer that outlines the dangers of hydraulic fracturing, or "fracking," which is how LNG is extracted.

"There is nothing natural about fracking, which involves drilling a shaft up to four kilometres down into the rock, then several more horizontally for up to three more kilometres. Large amounts of water, sand and chemicals are injected under high pressure into the rock, cracking and fissuring it to release gas deposits. During its lifetime, each fracking well consumes more than 90 million litres of clean water - the volume of 36 Olympic-size swimming pools. In fact, in parts of the United States

BC Premier John Horgan celebrates the approval of the LNG Canada - the cake reads, "we did it". October, 2018.

drinking-water wells have dried up due to withdrawals for fracking.

Some of this water, sand and chemical slurry remains underground, while a proportion of it comes back up to the surface and must be dealt with. Much of it is stored in fracking ponds that are similar to tailings ponds from mining, which risk leakage and overflow after strong rains. Many of these chemicals such as benzene and cadmium are known to cause harm to human health. Research has also documented cases of clean water contamination from the fracking process. In summary, we are injecting a mixture of harmful and unstudied chemicals into the earth, using a process that risks contamination of clean water sources.

Fracking also releases pollutants and carcinogenic chemicals into the atmosphere. Studies demonstrate an increase in asthma and other respiratory diseases in people who live close to fracking operations, with higher rates of hospital admissions for heart, cancer, skin, nerve and bladder disease found nearby. More babies born with congenital heart defects and higher rates of pre-term births have also been observed among those who live close to fracking sites."

What's more, it has been shown to cause a huge increase in earthquakes. Take this recent Business Insider article, "Parts of Oklahoma now have the same earthquake risk as California — and a new study found a scarily direct link to fracking".

"Until recently, earthquakes in Oklahoma were few and far between. In 2010, the state experienced just 41 tremors. By comparison, Southern California has about 10,000 earthquakes each year.

Over the past few years, Oklahoma has weathered hundreds of significant quakes—more than 900 in 2015 alone, according to an academic journal, The Conversation — as have parts of several other Midwestern states. The region is replete with eons-old fault lines that went quiet long ago, but wastewater operations appear to be re-awakening some of those faults."

3. Destroying the Fresh Water

The BC government also seems determined to give the LNG industry the green light for illegal dams already built to provide fresh water for fracking. The Narwhal points out, "The industry's growing need for fresh water has resulted in the construction of at least 90 unlicensed dams in northeast B.C."

Route of the 670km Coastal Gaslink Pipeline Project through BC, terminating in Kitamat at LNG Canada.

As Ben Parfitt of the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA) wrote, "In a decision without precedent in its 25 years of existence, British Columbia's Environmental Assessment Office has told Progress Energy that two massive unauthorized dams that it built will not have to undergo environmental assessments.

The decision comes after the company made an audacious request to the Environmental Assessment Office to have the two dams declared retroactively exempt from review — a request that was quietly granted by the province's self-described neutral environmental regulator on July 17."

The dams are already wreaking havoc. In August, the BC Oil and Gas Commission (BCOGC) issued a directive for oil and gas companies to suspend water withdrawals used for fracking in the Peace River and Liard watersheds due to drought condition.

4. Indigenous Rights Under Attack

The project is supported by elected councils of 25 First Nations communities along the pipeline route and the Haisla First Nation. However, the Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chiefs whose traditional territories the pipeline would be built on, reaffirmed their opposition to the project. The hereditary system has been tested in court several times and has helped form the laws most aboriginal rights and title cases have been based upon.

This has played out many times before, where the government pits the "elected" leaders of a governance system they imposed on Indigenous nations against the traditional leadership it attempts to minimize.

It's also a terrible situation to impose on impoverished Indigenous nations: support this project and get something, or oppose it and get nothing. Witset elected Chief

Sign at the Unist'ot'en camp checkpoint resisting LNG development.

Victor Jim said, "When CGL (Coastal Gas Link) came to our meeting, I asked them 'Even if we don't sign you guys are coming through, aren't you?' And he said, 'Yes, we are.'"

What kind of choice is that?

The Dini Ze' (Highest Hereditary Chiefs) of the Wet'suwet'en Nation recently visited and reaffirmed their support of the Unist'ot'en Camp, which was built by Wet'suwet'en and supporters to stop pipeline construction on their territories. They declared, "We are the plaintiffs in a Supreme Court of Canada 1997 landmark case recognizing our Title and Rights - There will be no pipelines crossing our unceded territories - We will stop all proposed pipelines."

The Unitst'ot'en Camp also issued this following appeal, "THE TIME IS NOW. We need your support. Yesterday TransCanada tried to enter Unist'ot'en territory to begin work on their Coastal GasLink fracked gas pipeline. They were respectfully turned away by Johnny Morris of the Gidimt'en Clan."

5. Corporate Subsidies for Those Who Were Already Ruining the Planet

At a technical briefing for media, a senior BC government official put the province's total financial incentives for the LNG Canada project at $5.35 billion. LNG Canada will get:

- A break on the carbon tax.

- The elimination of the LNG income tax.

- Cheaper electricity rates than those set by the previous Liberal administration.

- A PST exemption which means that LNG Canada will not have to pay provincial sales tax during the project's five-year construction period.

- A natural gas tax credit which gives companies an additional three percent corporate income tax cut.

Not a bad deal for what will be B.C's largest carbon polluter run by some of the most profitable corporations in the world: Royal Dutch Shell, Mitsubishi Corp., Petronas, PetroChina Co. and Korean Gas Corp.

6. LNG: Good for Corporations, Bad for Working People

While there is a lot of talk about jobs for people in B.C. It's useful to look at the live example of Australia which went "all in" on LNG production in the last decade.

As reported by Mark Lee of the CCPA, "While Australia is now poised to become the world's largest LNG exporter by 2020, 'success' turned into a political crisis by early 2017. Just as the taps were turned on for three massive new export projects on the country's east coast near Gladstone, Queensland, prices shot up for Aussie households and businesses in major urban areas like Sydney. Local prices for gas at one point cost more than the gas is exported to Japan.

Richard Denniss, Chief Economist of The Australia Institute, argues that the hidden objective of LNG exporters all along was to raise domestic gas prices. Abundant gas supplies and low prices might have been good for Aussie households and manufacturers, but not for the gas industry, which wants to sell its gas for the highest price possible, wherever in the world that may be."

He points out the striking similarities between the same sweet deals LNG corporations got in BC, and some more of the unexpected consequences for poor and working people,

"Similar to the BC framework, LNG majors in Australia can fully deduct all of their capital costs before they pay federal resource rent taxes, meaning that cost overruns are passed on to the public sector in the form of reduced revenues. Such cost overruns are common in the LNG industry. Australia's recent LNG projects have experienced $50 billion in cost overruns, the most legendary being the Gorgon project in Western Australia, which was $20 billion over budget and cost $54 billion to build.

The Sydney Morning Herald writes that the city of Gladstone has seen a boom and bust due to a temporary surge of workers to build three LNG plants in the area. During the boom housing became unaffordable to locals and seniors and professionals were forced to move away. After a surge of 14,500 construction jobs for a few years, in a town of 60,000, the completed LNG terminals now only provide 500 permanent jobs."

So who is getting the better deal? The corporations who get all of the subsidies, or the people who get a short-term construction boom that makes their town unaffordable, followed by relatively minimal permanent jobs and higher domestic gas prices?

7. They Get the Boom; We Get the Bust

The environmental case is clear. Massive new fossil-fuel projects make it impossible to meet the carbon reduction targets the scientific consensus is telling us we need to enact to keep the planet inhabitable. It's also obvious that the BC government is trying to side-step very real concerns about Indigenous Rights and Title, which they previously committed to upholding. What's more, is that this project would follow the same trajectory as every other massive resource extraction project. The corporations get all of the subsidies and profits of the short-term"boom" and poor and working people are left with all of the poverty and devastated communities of the "bust." Fundamentally this is the way capitalism works. We demand a better life. We deserve a better world. We demand system change.

No More LNG in BC!
People and Planet Before LNG, Pipelines and Profits!

Follow Thomas on Twitter:@thomasdavies59

MOTHER OF ALL STRUGGLES!

Indigenous struggle against colonialism

Howard Adams (Métis)
1921 - 2001

Revolutionary Métis Marxist scholar and professor Howard Adams grew up in a Métis community in Saskatchewan. He was a leader in the struggle for Indigenous rights, self-determination, and socialism.

The present formal education program is irrelevant and meaningless to native people. The white middle-class values inherent in classroom instruction mean very little to native students. The curriculum is so strange that students have difficulty relating it to their frame of reference and making it part of their knowledge. Métis and Indian children drop out of school because the program is as alien to them as ballet. At the same time, the school negates native history and culture. If it were not for the "white ideal" operating within native persons, these schools would have little support from natives.

From Chapter 12: "Schooling the Redman" in Prison of Grass, 1975.

MAWO Marks 15 Years of Antiwar Organizing

By Alison Bodine

In the past 17 years, poor, working and oppressed people in every part of the globe have faced the onslaught of U.S.-led wars and occupations. Invasions, air-raids, nuclear warheads, chemical weapons, sanctions, blockades, assassinations, covert military operations, drone warfare – these are only some of the devastating attacks of the new era of war and occupation that characterizes the world that we live in today. However, in the face of the most murderous and destructive war machine ever seen, people around the world, from Afghanistan and Palestine to Yemen and Syria, and from to Haiti and Cuba, to Korea and Venezuela, continue to fight back. At the same time, building a stronger and more united antiwar movement across borders has never been so vital as it is today.

Attendees enjoying MAWOWE'EN event.

Vancouver, Canada's antiwar coalition Mobilization Against War and Occupation (MAWO) formed on October 29, 2003, to organize against the U.S./U.K. occupation of Iraq. Over the past 15 years, MAWO has been a constant antiwar voice in Canada and internationally, organizing consistent and creative campaigns against U.S.-led wars and occupations around the world and calling for self-determination for all oppressed nations.

Every month for 15 years MAWO has organized an antiwar rally and petition campaign, in addition to hundreds of pickets, protests, petition drives, cultural events, music and film festivals, and participation in countless community and campus events. An important part of MAWO's work has also been as a member of international antiwar organizations and coalitions, coordinating events especially with groups in the United States.

People stopping by the MAWO table during the rally to sign petitions.

It is a difficult task to reflect on 15 years of antiwar organizing all in one evening, but that is what happened at MAWO's annual MAWOWE'EN event held on November 2, 2018, at the Old Crow Coffee Co. in the heart of New Westminster, BC. MAWO Executive members Alison, Azza and Janine, hosted the event, as participants looked back at 15 years of antiwar organizing. While a dynamic program of a photo slideshow, poetry, live music, and a salsa dance lesson carried the everyone participating towards another year of educating, organizing and mobilizing against the war at home and abroad.

More actions marking 15 years of antiwar organizing with Mobilization Against War and Occupation will be organized in 2019.

U.S./U.K./France /Canada/ Saudi/UAE, Hands Off Yemen!

MAWO Campaign Against War on Yemen Continues

In the final two weeks of November, Mobilization Against War and Occupation organized two successful actions against the U.S.-backed, Saudi-led war against Yemen. For over three years, the people of Yemen have faced a deadly bombing campaign that has killed over 56,000 people, and an air, land and sea blockade that has starved 85,000 children to death and put 17 million people at risk of starvation.

Despite this humanitarian crisis, the war on Yemen remains largely out of mainstream media coverage and the United States, Canada and the U.K. continue to sell hundreds of billions of dollars of deadly weapons to Saudi Arabia.

With the assassination of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi by Saudi Arabia, egregious human rights violations by Saudi Arabia were further exposed, and far too late, the U.S.-backed war on Yemen became a discussion in primetime newscasts and the U.S. Congress.

In response, the Saudi and Yemeni communities in Vancouver came to together with MAWO to organize a rally: "Violations of Human Rights by Saudi Arabia from Khashoggi to Yemen! Stop the U.S./Saudi/UAE Aggression and Killings in Yemen Now! Canada Cancel the Arms Deal with Saudi Arabia!" This rally on November 25, was an important opportunity to engage with people in Vancouver about the role that the government of Canada, which has pledged its intention to proceed with a $15 billion arms sale to Saudi Arabia, plays in the war against Yemen.

For antiwar activists, the change in tone towards Saudi Arabia of colonial powers such as the U.S., E.U. and Canada after the assassination of Khashoggi raised important questions such as: Are they really concerned? What is really behind the rhetoric of ceasefire and stopping the war in Yemen? What is the real alternative for the people of Yemen?

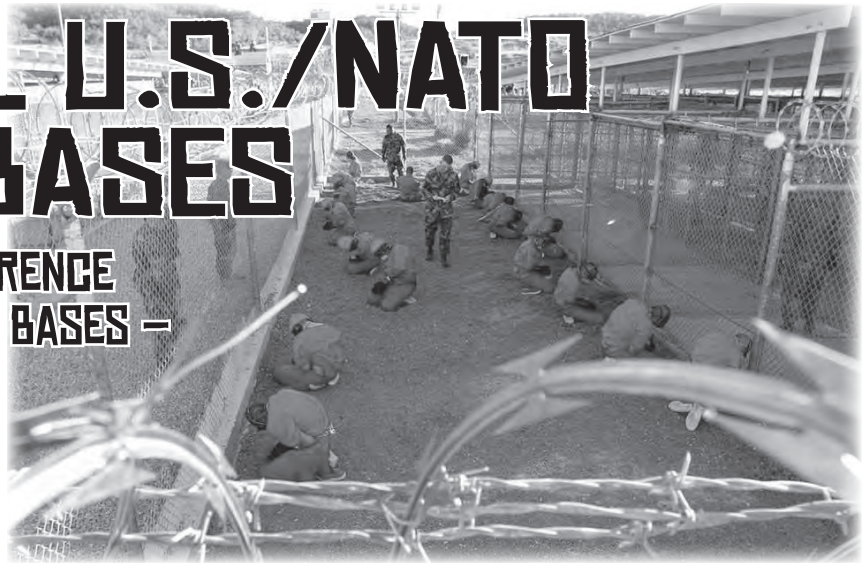
MAWO public forum on Yemen.

These questions and more were the topic of discussion at a MAWO public forum held on November 30. This forum featured Azza Rojbi, MAWO Executive Committee member and Tunisian social justice activist, Shaker Al-Abeidi, Yemeni-Canadian social justice activist and Khalid Al-Seragi, Yemeni-Canadian community organizer, who brought the brutal war against Yemen into the important context of all U.S.-led wars and occupations throughout the Middle East and Africa.

MAWO is continuing to educate, organize and mobilize against imperialist wars and occupations. To find out about upcoming events and actions and to get involved visit www.mawovancouver.org or follow on Facebook or @mawovan on Twitter.

Follow Alison on Twitter: @Alisoncolette

CLOSE ALL U.S./NATO MILITARY BASES



FIRST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE AGAINST U.S./NATO MILITARY BASES – DUBLIN, IRELAND

By Alison Bodine

The New Era of War & Occupation

In 2017, 2.9 million people became refugees – this is only one of the devastating reminders that the world today is characterized by wars and occupations led by the United States government and their allies. Over 68 million people have been displaced due to the killings, chaos and sheer destruction imposed by the U.S. war machine. From Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria, Libya and Yemen, to continuous intervention in Africa and Latin America, and threats and sanctions against North Korea, Venezuela and Iran, there is no corner of the globe that the United States and their allies have left out of their deadly targets.

This is the new era of war and occupation, which began in 2001, with the U.S./NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) invasion of Afghanistan and continues through today as a continuous onslaught against poor, working and oppressed people both at home and abroad. Three U.S. Presidents have overseen this bloodshed brought down on people around the world: George W, Bush, Barack Obama and now, Donald Trump.

After over 17 years of occupation by the US/NATO, 2018 is already the deadliest year for civilians in Afghanistan. In Iraq, over 1 million people have been killed since the 2003 U.S./U.K. invasion. In Libya, which was subjected to a non-stop U.S./NATO bombing campaign, the country is not only in chaos, human slavery has once again reared its ugly head. For more than six years, the people of Syria have been fighting against U.S. intervention, and imperialist support for so-called rebels that have attempted to tear the country, and the social fabric of Syria apart. Over half of the population of Syria has been displaced, either within or outside of the country. The people of Yemen are being murdered and starved by continuous bombing and a blockade carried out by the U.S.-backed, Saudi-led coalition – making Yemen the world's worst humanitarian crisis.

The new era of war and occupation has also brought with it increasing attacks on the human, democratic and civil rights of people living in the United States. With the "Patriot Act" and its many subsequent manifestations, people in the U.S. are subject to violations of their basic rights to freedom of speech and assembly. Police and the military are increasingly unleashed against poor, working and oppressed people who are fighting for their human rights and dignity. Racism, xenophobia, Islamophobia are being promoted by the U.S. government to divide people - not only within the U.S., but also to convince people in the U.S. that people they are killing in the Middle East and Africa are not their brothers and sisters, but their enemies. The so-called "War on Terror" has cost the U.S. more than $2.9 trillion (Stimson Study Group On Counterterrorism Spending 2002-2017), which could have been spent on providing people in the U.S. with housing, healthcare and education.

U.S./NATO Military Bases Facilitate Death & Destruction

How are the U.S. government and their allies able to carve such a devastating path throughout the globe? To start with, the U.S. military admits to having 4,800 defence sites in 160 countries around the world (U.S. Department of Defense). By various estimates, this amounts to between 800-1,000 military bases which are spread out over all seven continents.

There are 450,000 U.S. soldiers deployed to these bases, spread out over a globe that the U.S. has divided into six different sectors. Each sector has a command centre that controls their operations: SOUTHCOM (Latin America), AFRICOM (Africa), INDPACOM (India, East Asia and Pacific), CENTCOM (Central and West Asia, the Middle East), EUCOM (Europe), NORTHCOM (North America).

The NATO military alliance is also aggressively strengthening its presence in coordination with U.S. imperialist expansion. NATO has 29 member-states, with formal agreements with another 42 countries through the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC), NATO's Mediterranean Dialogue, Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI), and Global Partners initiatives.

NATO and U.S. military bases combined form a strategic network of deadly military might that wages wars, occupations and provocations across the globe. The alignment of these bases and operations clearly demonstrates the countries that are of most concern to the U.S. government and their designs for global hegemony – take a look at the maps of bases that surround Iran, Russia, China and Korea.

The First International Conference Against U.S./NATO Military Bases

In response to the deepening of the capitalist financial and market crisis, the U.S. government and their imperial allies see no solution other than to gain control of new resources and people to exploit around the world. For this exploitation to be possible, the U.S.-led war machine must first pave the way.

The new era of war and occupation continues to spread its tentacles, and with this expansion also comes the increasing resistance of people around the world to U.S./NATO wars, occupations and provocations. People from Afghanistan and Palestine to Venezuela, Iran and Korea continue to resist. Working, poor and oppressed people in imperialist countries have an increasing responsibility to fight against wars both at home and abroad. Politically and dynamically fighting against capitalist class at home is indeed the continuation of fighting against imperialist wars abroad.

It is with this perspective that nearly 300 people from 35 countries gathered in Dublin, Ireland for the First International Conference Against U.S./NATO Military Bases from November 16-18, 2018. It was organized by the Coalition Against U.S. Foreign Military Bases, based in

the United States, and the Peace and Neutrality Alliance in Ireland (PANA).

The three days of the conference featured many prominent International antiwar activists and organizations, who shared their analysis, as well as their experiences in organizing against U.S./NATO military bases. This included plenary sessions focusing on: Militarism, Nuclear Weapons, and Military Bases; Environmental and Health Impact of Military Bases; Central and South America/Guantanamo; Asia Pacific / Pivot to Asia / Okinawa (Japan); The Middle East: US/NATO Plan; Europe/NATO Expansion; and Africa/Africom.

Among other important presentations and discussions, the continuation of U.S. occupation of Guantanamo, Cuba was highlighted. Within the so-called "War on Terror", the U.S. military has used Guantanamo Base as a torture prison.

MAWO Executive member Azza Rojbi exchanging with conference goers and showcasing examples MAWO's work.

For almost 120 years, the U.S. has illegally occupied Guantanamo – and Cuba has been fighting for its return since the triumph of the Cuban revolution in 1959.

U.S. and imperialist threats against Venezuela were also raised at the Conference, where it was established that the United States government has targeted the democratically elected government for "regime change." U.S. threats have been heightened by the presence of the U.S. Southern Command, military exercises, and the recent inclusion of Colombia as a Global Partner of NATO.

Vancouver's Peace Coalition MAWO in Dublin

Mobilization Against War and Occupation (MAWO) was the only antiwar organization from Canada that attended the First International Conference Against U.S./NATO Military Bases. Two members of the Executive Committee, MAWO Chair Alison Bodine and Azza Rojbi participated in the Conference and the important work of building a global campaign against U.S./NATO military bases.

As a member of NATO and a close ally of the United States, the government of Canada is complicit in the new era of war and occupation. Their hands are also covered in the blood of people in Afghanistan, Iraq, Yemen, Sudan, Somalia, Libya, Mali, Ukraine and all countries where imperialism has carried out its deadly exploits.

At the Conference, MAWO also joined with other organizations, in the beginning, to plan for a strong mobilization in response to the April 4, 2019 meeting of NATO that will be taking place in Washington, DC. As NATO meets marking its 70th anniversary, they will be faced with protests and other actions calling the organization out for what it is: a weapon of war and occupation unleashed against poor, working and oppressed people around the world.

For more about the ongoing work of MAWO and to get involved, visit www.mawovancouver.org

Build a Stronger and More United Movement Against U.S./NATO Military Bases!

Dr. Aleida Guevara, a Cuban pediatrician and daughter of legendary revolutionary Che Guevara, opened the First International Conference Against U.S./NATO Military Bases with the important message:

"We do not do enough in these types of gatherings, these are the first steps, but these are not enough. This action has to be multiplied; the information has to be spread to thousands and thousands of people, all together, we will be strong enough.

We must all find this strength together. We need it. We need to have information. We need to have unity. In order to have unity, we need to have mutual respect among all of us. We need to have common goals. We have to leave behind the small differences between this or that organization and have common goals for our fight. That is the way we have to work."

It is with this perspective that peace-loving people around the world must work to build a stronger and more united global movement against U.S./NATO military bases. With thousands of military bases around the globe, the military cooperation of the U.S. and NATO knows no borders, and poor, working and oppressed people must also work to build a united movement across borders that can close all U.S./NATO military bases and stop the deadly imperialist war machine in its tracks.

Follow Alison on Twitter: @Alisoncolette

Join us to build a revolutionary movement!
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PRESS COMMUNIQUÉ OF THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE AGAINST U.S./NATO FOREIGN MILITARY BASES

Photo by Ellen Davidson

The first International Conference against US/NATO Military Bases was held on November 16-18, at the Liberty Hall in Dublin, Ireland. The conference was attended by close to 300 participants from over thirty-five countries from around the world. Speakers representing countries from all continents, including Cuba, Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, United States, Italy, Germany, Portugal, Greece, Cyprus, Turkey, Poland, United Kingdom, Ireland, Czech Republic, Israel, Palestine, Kenya, D. R. Congo, Japan and Australia, made presentations at the conference.

This conference was the first organized effort by the newly formed Global campaign against US/NATO Military Bases, created by over 35 peace, justice and environmental organizations and endorsed by over 700 other organizations and activists from around the world. What brought all of us together in this International Conference was our agreement with the principles outlined in the Global Campaign's Unity Statement, which was endorsed by the Conference participants.

The participants in the Conference heard from and shared with representatives of organizations and movements struggling for the abolition of foreign military bases from around the world about the aggressions, interventions, death, destruction, and the health and environmental damages that the military bases have been causing for the whole humanity along with the threats and violation to the sovereignty of the "host" countries.

The participants and organizers of the conference agreed as a matter of principle that while they oppose all foreign military bases, they consider the close to 1,000 US/NATO military bases established throughout the world, which constitute the main pillars of global imperialist domination by US, NATO and EU states, as the main threat to peace and humanity, and must all be closed. The NATO states' military bases are the military expression of imperialist intervention in the lives of sovereign countries on behalf of the dominant, financial, political, and military interests, for the control of energy resources, transport roads, markets and spheres of influence, in clear violation of international law and the United Nations Charter.

The participants in the Conference call upon the organizations and movements who agree on the above to work closely with each other in a coordinated manner as a part of the Global Campaign to organize and mobilize the public around the world against US/NATO military bases.

While we call for the closure of all US/NATO military bases, we consider the closure of bases and military installations in certain countries and areas as needing special attention by the international movement. These, for example, include the Guantanamo US base in Cuba, the US bases in Okinawa and South Korea, the US Base in Rammstein/Germany, Serbia, the old and new US/NATO bases in Greece and Cyprus, the establishment of the new US African Command (AFRICOM) with its affiliated military bases in Africa, the numerous NATO bases in Italy and Scandinavia, the Shannon airport in Ireland, which is being used as a military base by US and NATO, and the newly established bases by the United States, France and their allies on and around the Syrian soil.

In order to continue our joint Global Campaign in solidarity with the just causes of the peoples in their struggle against foreign military aggression, occupation and interference in their internal affairs, and the devastating environmental and health impacts of these bases the participants agreed to recommend and to support coordinated actions and initiatives in the coming year (2019) which shall strengthen the global movement to expand the actions and cooperation while moving forward.

As a step toward this goal, the conference supports the global mass mobilizations against NATO's 70th anniversary Summit in Washington DC, on April 4, 2019 and respective protests in the NATO member states and worldwide.

We declare our solidarity with the Cuban people's decades-long efforts to take back their Guantanamo territory, illegally occupied by the United States, and declare our support for the Sixth International Seminar for Peace and the Abolition of Foreign Military Bases, organized by MOVPAZ for May 4-6, 2019, in Guantanamo, Cuba.

The participants express their most sincere thanks and gratitude to the Peace and Neutrality Alliance (PANA) Ireland, for their generous hospitality and support in hosting this historic Conference.

Adopted by the participants at the

First International Conference Against US/NATO Military Bases

November 18, 2018

Dublin, Ireland

The World Stands with Cuba - From the United Nations to United Actions!

By Janine Solanki

On October 31, United States Ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley tweeted about the upcoming 27th annual United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) resolution against the U.S. blockade on Cuba, saying that "countries will have to vote between Cuba or the US. Who will vote with us?" Haley got a resounding response on November 1st when 189 countries voted with Cuba, against the U.S. blockade. Only Israel joined the U.S. in their shameful and isolated vote against the resolution. The UNGA gave Nikki Haley and the U.S. government a loud and clear answer - "¡Cuba Si! ¡Bloqueo No!"

From the halls of the United Nations, to grassroots protests on the streets, justice loving people are standing in solidarity with Cuba against this criminal U.S. blockade. On November 17, 2018, Cuba solidarity activists joined in protest in Vancouver, Ottawa and Montreal, Canada and Kiev, Ukraine!

In Vancouver, Friends of Cuba Against the U.S. Blockade (FCAB-Vancouver) picketed in front of the U.S. Consulate, raising voices and picket signs high to demand "Lift the Blockade on Cuba Now!" and "Return Guantanamo to Cuba Now!" In between rounds of picketing, supporters of the Cuba solidarity campaign heard from local speakers and organizers. Participants were reminded that this Vancouver action is made stronger indeed by its coordination with other Cuba solidarity activists in Ottawa, Montreal and Kiev, Ukraine who were also out in front of their U.S. embassies and consulates on this day!

The action on the streets wrapped up but continued online where the world could see photos from the action on Twitter! Friends of Cuba Against the Blockade also participated in a special Twitter Storm "Fidel and Solidarity Among the Peoples" on November 16, paying homage to Fidel Castro, the historic leader of the Cuban Revolution leading up to the second anniversary of his passing.

Join Friends of Cuba Against the U.S. Blockade next month! For more info and actions visit www.vancubavsblockade.org or follow on Facebook and Twitter @NoBloqueoVan

Follow Janine on Twitter: @janinesolanki

Hands Off Venezuela! No to Sanctions! No to Threats!

By Janine Solanki

On November 1, 2018 U.S. President Trump signed an executive order targeting gold exports from Venezuela – a resource which Venezuela is using to lessen the harmful impacts of the economic war that the U.S., Canada and EU have imposed with brutal sanctions against Venezuela.

The undemocratic imperialist campaign to force "regime change" in Venezuela has been full of dangerous and war-mongering rhetoric against Venezuela's democratically elected government of President Nicolas Maduro. In Vancouver, Canada, the Fire This Time Venezuela Solidarity Campaign has been organizing in solidarity with Venezuela for many years, to protest the U.S. and Canada's threats and vicious actions against Venezuela. Fire This Time activists campaign to defend the important gains that the Bolivarian Revolution has brought to the Venezuela people.

On November 2, the Fire This Time Venezuela Solidarity Campaign held a monthly action in front of the U.S. Consulate in downtown Vancouver. Participants heard from speakers, chanted demands and picketed with signs and a giant banner for all to see, reading U.S./Canada Hands Off Venezuela! After the picket action, the protest moved to the busy public square in front of the Vancouver Art Gallery for a petition drive and info display. Activists approached people walking by, discussing the truth about the gains in Venezuela and asking passers-by to sign on to a petition against Canada's sanctions against Venezuela!

Join the action next month to stand with the people of Venezuela, to defend their sovereignty and self-determination! Check for events and info at www.firesthistime.net or follow on Facebook and Twitter @FTT_np

Follow Janine on Twitter: @janinesolanki

Opposition to NEB Sham Review Mobilizes

By Thomas Davies

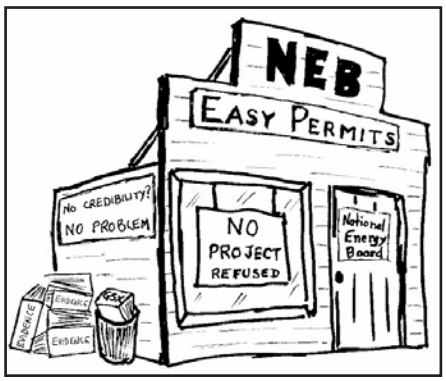
Almost exactly as the National Energy Board's (NEB) new review of the marine impacts of the Trans Mountain Pipeline Expansion (TMX) began, a preview of one of the devastating potential impacts of the expansion was on full display. Newfoundland faced its largest-ever marine oil spill, of over 250,000 litres of light crude.

The company responsible, Husky Energy, now says the oil has broken down so much that it can't be cleaned up. Their justification? "We followed our procedures," according to Trevor Pritchard, senior vice-president of Husky Energy Atlantic Region. Like all other oil and gas corporations, Husky Energy feels no accountability.

Are They Going to Drain the Ocean?

The Husky spill was light crude oil, the Trans Mountain Pipeline Expansion would result in a seven-fold increase in oil tanker traffic, but carrying diluted bitumen.

Diluted bitumen (also known as dilbit) is the industry term for Tar Sands oil. Dilbit is a mixture of the heavy tar-like bitumen that is mined from Tar Sands deposits and a highly flammable natural gas condensate that is mixed with the bitumen.



The oil industry has tried to claim that diluted bitumen floats with the same (apparently also uncleanable) properties of other oil, but scientists say otherwise. So do the real world examples. The Kalamazoo River oil spill occurred in July 2010 when a pipeline operated by Enbridge burst. At least 1 million gallons of dilbit blackened more than two miles of Talmadge Creek and almost 36 miles of the Kalamazoo River.

In the Kalamazoo case, the oil began sinking within two weeks. The cleanup took five years and cost over a billion dollars. If you look at the pictures, you can see entire sections of the river drained to clean to the bottom of the river. How do they expect to do that in the ocean?

NEB = National ~~Energy~~ (Extinction) Board

Does anyone have confidence the NEB will give this evidence a fair hearing? Prime Minister Trudeau ordered a time limit of 22 weeks based not on the time required to do a real assessment, but on railroading the process through to completion. As we previously reported, the NEB panel is flawed from the get-go, "Unfortunately, the ones who are to consider this compelling evidence and issue an unbiased report don't inspire any confidence. All were appointed by former Conservative Prime Minister Stephen Harper. Alison Scott oversaw the initial flawed review of the pipeline. Lyne Mercier was previously forced to recuse herself from the 2016 review of the Energy East pipeline project following an exposed private meeting with an industry representative, and according to Murray Lyttle's NEB bio he has 'held a series of senior positions in the oil, gas and mining industries' with 'nearly 40 years' experience in the energy and mining sectors spanning North America, South America and Asia.'"

Leading up to the hearings, impacted groups and individuals met the bizarre requirement of submitting only faxes, and sent over 66,400 messages calling on the National Energy Board to respect Indigenous Rights and Title and to

take real action to save the endangered Southern Resident Killer Whales leading up to the hearings.

"The Trudeau government's slick, quick and dirty NEB process is a kick in the teeth to the Federal Court of Appeal ruling which quashed the federal approval for the Trans Mountain pipeline and tanker project," said Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, President of the Union of BC Indian Chiefs (UBCIC).

Climate Convergence community discussion with Dr. Zickfeld

"There is no chance that the impossibly short time frame and under-resourcing of the current NEB process will allow Canada to address the marine impacts of Trans Mountain properly. We continue to demand that this ill-conceived, dirty, garbage oil fuel expansion project be completely scrapped and that Canada invests in real clean energy development projects."

"Since the discussion on this project started, a tanker in Vancouver Harbour spilled 40,000 litres of bunker fluid, and it took 8 hours for anyone to respond," pointed out Chief Tyrone McNeil Sto:lo Tribal Council. "That's not a good sign."

"We know that there are impacts already from tanker traffic on the killer whale population and they have to consider their well-being, and they can't just deny there is no impact on the killer whales," said Chief Don Tom of the Tsartlip First Nation. "We're on the right side of history when it comes to this pipeline project, and I believe it's dead in the water."

We Won't Back Down

Interestingly, the NEB will conduct no review hearings in Vancouver, despite it being the location of many affected Indigenous nations and the fact that they already have and permanent office there. The pipeline would even terminate close by. Instead, they will take place in Calgary, Victoria and Nanaimo.

This is probably not surprising given the intense level of opposition in the area. The week the hearings opened the Climate Convergence coalition organized a "Salish Sea Vs. NEB!" Day of Action. Over 150 people took over the intersection in front of the NEB Vancouver office, holding hand painted sea creatures from the effected Salish Sea. Police and extra security were present both inside and outside of the office, as protesters chanted, "We've been here before, it's plain to see, we're being sold out by the NEB!"

Climate Convergence rally in front of NEB office in Vancouver.

Participants then marched through the busy Black Friday crowds downtown chanting, "Build Our Future, Not a Pipeline!" and distributed information about the TMX Pipeline Expansion and sham NEB review. The rally grew as passersby joined in and began chanting as well.

At the Vancouver Public Library Simon Fraser University climatologist Dr. Kirsten Zickfeld, a Lead Author of the recent United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report, summarized its findings, which warn of catastrophic effects from climate change if the world does not significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the next 12 years.

Dr. Zickfeld was very clear on two points: there is no room for the TMX Pipeline carbon emissions in the world's remaining "carbon budget," but there is also a clear path to a sustainable world. "We know the way forward, what's lacking is the political leadership to make it happen."

Discussion continued on the local issue of stopping the TMX pipeline as well as connecting this struggle to the larger international movement confronting the emerging climate emergency. What was most clear: people have not given hope in defeating the pipeline, or building a just and sustainable world. The NEB hearings are expected to finish in mid-February, and there will be ongoing climate justice actions before, during and after the sham review process is complete.

No TMX Pipeline Expansion!
Build Our Future, Not a Pipeline!

Follow Climate Convergence on Twitter: @Climate604

Follow Thomas on Twitter:@thomasdavies59

Battle of Ideas Press
Upcoming Book Release
SYSTEM CHANGE NOT CLIMATE CHANGE
By Thomas Davies
Thomas Davies is a social and environmental justice organizer based in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. He is a member of the Editorial Board of the Fire This Time Newspaper and a founding member of Climate Convergence Metro-Vancouver.

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Public Forum, October 22, 2018
Excerpts of Alan Freeman's talk

What is Really Happening in Venezuela?

From October 21-22, 2018 the "What is Really Happening in Venezuela?" speaking tour took place in British Columbia, Canada, organized by the Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice Venezuela Solidarity Campaign. A total of three dynamic events were held: at the Vancouver Public Library, Thompson Rivers University in Kamloops, and Vancouver Island University in Nanaimo - bringing the truth about Venezuela to hundreds of workers, students and activists who would not have otherwise heard about what is happening on the ground due to mass media lies and distortions.

During the BC tour, Alan Freeman joined Professor Steve Ellner as a featured speaker. Alan Freeman is a Marxist scholar and a founding member of Winnipeg Venezuela Peace Committee (https://nosanctions.org/).

The following are excerpts from the talk given by Alan Freeman at the Vancouver Island University event which was co-hosted by Friends of Venezuela in Nanaimo and the Vancouver Island University Faculty Association International Solidarity and Human Rights Committee, and chaired by Professor Imogene Lim.

This speaking tour was part of a larger tour coordinated between the U.S. and Canada by the Campaign to End U.S. & Canada Sanctions on Venezuela. For more information about the Campaign visit: https://afgj.org/focus-areas/venezuela-solidarity-campaign/campaign-to-end-us-and-canada-sanctions-against-venezuela

To follow the FTT Venezuela Solidarity Campaign's ongoing actions, which will include other speaking tours, please visit www.firethistime.net or follow on Facebook and Twitter @FTT_np.

Alan Freeman's talk:

I am going to start with a picture. Everybody knows, if they have been following CNN, and CBC, and so-on that Venezuela is now going through a military dictatorship, the people are starving, they are all leaving for Colombia. I thought it would be useful to give you a picture of a military dictatorship so that you all know what it looks like. This was when I and Radhika Desai, my partner in crime in the Geopolitical Economy Research Group visited the military academy in Venezuela. You can actually see from some of the pictures there; these are young people who are in the army. They are going through training in the military academy. Everybody goes into the army at the age of 18; these are young working-class people off the streets. So, it is not an army of the type that one associate with the word "military dictatorship," in connection with, let's say Colombia, which is a U.S.-trained army, or Brazil which is a U.S.-trained army, or Chile which an aristocratic, basically caste, army that is antagonistic to the people. One of the things is that the history of Venezuela, it goes a long time back in the past, has involved an interaction between the army, the people and the government which is complex and needs to be understood and is very specific. That's the first point I want to make.

The second is the critical event which starts the process that led to first Hugo Chavez, and now Nicolas Maduro, being the Presidents of Venezuela and all the turmoil that there has been, right up to the present day. And that is an event called the Caracazo. The Caracazo is named after the city, Caracas. It was an event in which people took to the streets in the early 1990s because they felt betrayed by a President who had promised to give them

Cubans and Venezuelans living in Cuba march in solidarity with Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro - August 25, 2017 in Havana, Cuba

(From top to bottom) Events at the Vancouver Public Library, Thompson Rivers University (Kamloops) and Vancouver Island University (Nanaimo).

social advance. Who, instead of doing so, turned around after his election and stated 'I am now going to implement the policies which were suggested by the International Monetary Fund.' 'I am going to privatize Venezuela's resources; I am going to cut social spending, I am going to take away pension rights, health rights, education rights.

This was in a country which is already extremely unequal and extremely divided. This provoked huge anger, and people turned out in the streets to protest. They were shot, 3,000 people died. You will have heard about, from the opposition of Venezuela in the pages of the press, how many people have died in recent disturbances involving the government. I think that it is 236, of whom, actually nearly half, from the government's side. There have been clashes, and they have been very ugly, and they have been very important. But, to get a perspective you need to situate that against the Caracazo and the previous violence against poor people in Venezuela. You need to understand that the confrontation was engineered by the opposition in such a way that violence was on the agenda from the beginning, by the way, that the protests were organized. I am going to come back to that, to get a feel of the context for what that was about.

The basic reason is Venezuela's mineral wealth. It was until Saudi Arabia underwent the growth that took place after the Yom Kippur War and the OPEC [Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries] and then the re-opening of oil production, it was the greatest oil producer in the world, greater than Saudi Arabia. It has the second-greatest reserves of gold; it has reserves of Aluminum, Iron, it is a big steel producer, it has rare-earth. It is a great resource of mineral wealth.

One of the problems with mineral wealth is that you can earn very very high profits when prices go up. You have a class in Venezuela that is basically what I would call a rentier class. It lives off mineral rents.

So, you have an organized working class which is accustomed to striking with the intention of having a political impact. There is a constant involvement of the working class directly with politics. The character which you do find, you find that in Bolivia, you find that in Argentine to some extent, but it is very characteristic of Venezuela.

The third thing that you have got is that it is the most urbanized country in Latin America. There is a mass of very poor people who have no employment, who are completely marginalized and completely excluded.

Chavez stood for office, and to everybody's horror, he stood and won, overwhelmingly by a landslide in a democratic election. He immediately set about a process of changing the Constitution of Venezuela, and that Constitutional reform, a reform I think it was 1998, is critical to understand everything that followed. It produced a tiny, slim book which you can get, called the "blue book."

Rally during the electoral campaign for President Hugo Chavez - 1998 (above). Rally against U.S. intervention in Venezuela - April, 2018 (below).

It went like this, first there was a referendum on calling a Constituent Assembly. Now, a Constituent Assembly is a body in which you elect people, not necessarily by geographical area, but by representative classes. So, there are people that represent professionals, people who represent sectors of society. I was hoping to inform myself of the exact process of the election, I didn't have time, but it is meant to be representative of the different sectors. The point is it was a very democratic process: a referendum on whether to have a Constituent Assembly, Constituent Assembly producing the new Constitution and then referendum on the Constitution. Hyper-democratic process.

What then happened though, is Chavez embarked on a program of very large social spending, essentially using oil revenues. So that they took the revenues that came from the mineral wealth and said 'we are going to use that to try and resolve some of the problems of the very poor.' The important thing about that is probably the first time in Venezuelan history that there was an attempt to involve and include materially the marginalized sections of Venezuelan society, not just the working class. Who, actually regarding Venezuelan society, in a certain sense are a bit privileged because actually having a job conveys quite a lot of material wealth around you, with the system that the neoliberals tried to unwind which was one of the causes of the lack of popularity, called Prestaciones Sociales. At the end of each year of your work, when you leave work, you are entitled to get a one-month salary at the level of your salary as it is in the last year of your work.

The social housing and education programs were directed at people who did not even have that level of security. I should add, much more represented in those marginal classes are people of aboriginal origin, people of African-Caribbean origin. The class divisions are also very highly racialized in Venezuela. What we have is something that is overwhelming privileges for the first time, and beings into Venezuelan society people of colour, Black people, aboriginal people, and poor people in general.

The second thing that happened at the same time, and this is important to understanding how things subsequently evolved, is the formation of an organization called ALBA. This is actually, I discovered by talking to colleagues something that changed its name but its Alianza Bolivariana de America, but its the Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas. It is an attempt to bring together Latin American states by forging a Latin American program of development. One of Chavez' great skills was being able to go to governments of Latin American states, who were sometimes quite hostile. At that time, for example, Brazil had a very right-wing government, but he nevertheless went and discussed with the capitalist classes of Brazil, he was very persuasive with the government o,f Brazil and said 'you should be part of an association dedicated to Latin American advancement.'

Now, that brings us on to the role of the

Second Congress of Venezuelan Women - October, 2018 (above). Venezuelans march in commemoration of the University Student Day. The sign reads a "Territory Free of Illiteracy" - November, 2018

USA. Because two things happened. The opposition in Venezuela beings to change its character. What an opposition would normally do in a liberal democracy? If it is not voted in, it goes along to the Parliament, and it puts forward its alternative. It attempts to get things voted through Parliament if it doesn't succeed it goes to the people. It stands in the next election, and it hopes to win the majority of the vote because its policies are the best. There have been, I think we counted, 25 elections in Venezuela since the very first one, including gubernatorial elections, municipal elections and so on. Every single one of them the opposition has lost, except one and that one, was the one that took place when Chavez died, and Maduro took over. There was a vote for the Assembly. Maduro had been re-elected President, but in the Assembly, the opposition got a majority. That's the only election of significance that the opposition won.

Venezuela is the only country in Latin America where there a double system of vote counting: electronic and paper. They are checked against each other. In the occasions where fraud has been announced by the opposition, very frequently that is not done until they have lost. So, they have participated in the process, and have made no claim that there has been fraud till after the election is lost.

President Carter, who was part of the supervision team for the recent election, said it was the most democratic election that he has ever seen. So, yes, it is contested, but the discourse and narrative of fraud is one that is used as part of a wider policy of the opposition. That policy is to be what is characterized as a disloyal opposition. What is meant by a disloyal opposition? It is an opposition that seeks regime change by means other than elections.

What the opposition did was basically to organizes a series of measures of two characters. One was to use street protests as a means of organizing to bring about the downfall of the government. This came to a pitch after the Assembly had got the majority that was won by the opposition. It was declared by the majority in the Assembly that 'Maduro will last six months.'

Now, Maduro was the elected President. The Assembly does not have the Constitutional basis to overturn the government. That was, therefore, rejected by the courts. What then happened is the opposition goes to other states in Latin America, to North America, to Canada and says, 'we want you to help us to bring the President down.' So, what sets in is a regime change agenda. Same as what you have seen in Syria, same as what you have seen in other parts of the world. The United States is brought in by the opposition.

The social programs cause great difficulty with the opposition, but also at the same time with ALBA the foreign policy orientation of Chavez causes great problems for North America because what is being posed is the Latin American unity, the formation of essentially an economic unity of Latin America. Now, why is that important?

About the time of Chavez' death and Maduro's taking over, you get very serious economic problems. These are economic problems which everybody acknowledges. You get hyperinflation, and there are many reasons for that. Many of them involve mistakes that were made by the government. In particular, because it is a very import-sensitive country. Much of what the country uses is imported, especially because it is so urbanized, and much of the agriculture is underdeveloped in many respects.

What happens is that the exchange rate between the dollar and the Bolivar starts to sky-rocket as capital flees the country. That is not only because firms leave the country, but because the government never really manages to establish a system of exchange controls. Which is a fault, everybody recognizes that this is a fault and a failure.

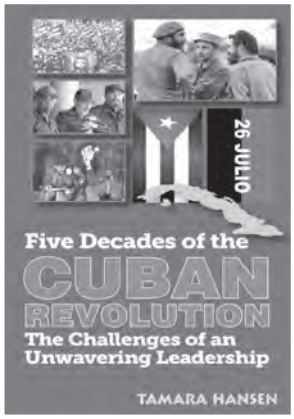
There are two things that I want to say. One must not conflate the economic difficulties with the democratic question. In my opinion, and the opinion of many, the level of involvement and participation, the level of democracy in Venezuela has increased, and has not decreased in response to the economic difficulties. One cannot assume that because there are economic problems, that that is because it is a dictatorship. Whatever the cause is, that is not it. On the contrary, Venezuela has responded by increasing participation, and increasing involvement of the population, which I think actually puts many countries to shame. That's the first point.

The second point is this: can sanctions help? What should be the response of Canadians? Let's take some of the measures that have been introduced.

One of the measures is that it is no longer possible for banks and foreign subsidiaries of Venezuelan companies to make transactions which transfer money into Venezuela. The petrol refining company, Citgo I think it is called that is owned by the Venezuelan state

Battle of Ideas Press

5 Decades of the Cuban Revolution
The Challenges of an Unwavering Leadership



By Tamara Hansen

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in the United States of America is sitting on an estimated $1-1.5 billion, which it is not allowed to transfer back to Venezuela. How does it help starving people to deny them access to their own money? It does not.

The first thing one has to understand is that the economic sanctions do not help the humanitarian situation, but they are preparing for an intervention. They are preparing for an attempt at regime change.

The third point is this: there is almost no experience in history, certainly recent history, where an intervention either from the United States or sponsored by the United States, has made a country better off. The result will be basically a civil war.

Canada should not be part of that. Canada should not be part of being responsible for the bloodbath and suffering that would follow for a successful policy of overthrow of the regime.

I am not here to say 'you must support Maduro,' I am giving you my take on what I think is happening, other takes are perfectly possible. What I am here to say is that I don't think that the Canadian government should be siding with regime change and sanctions.

I am going to finish on one point which I think is very important. This is to understand the way in which the Canadian government got itself involved in imposing sanctions. There are two parts to the sanctions: the so-called Special Economic Measures Act, and there's the Magnitsky Act. The Magnitsky Act is a Canadian shadow of an Act passes by America for it to impose sanctions on Russia, although it has been used in other contexts.

The first one allows them to take economic measures; the second one allows them to target named individuals. There are about 40 named individuals in Venezuela who have had sanctions taken against them. It basically stops you hearing what they have to say; they can't come here, they are prevented, they are not allowed. It is the denial of your freedom of information in my opinion.

Regarding the first measure, under International Law, you actually need an International Association to legally impose sanctions. No International Association could be found which would agree to these measures. What Canada did was establish a special association on the spot, consisting of two countries, Canada and the United States of America. This is hardly conforming to the spirit of International Law which regards to multilateral action by nations.

The second thing that they did, especially important to the Magnitsky measures is the evidence for making these sanctions has never been published. The grounds for these sanctions have never been published. The sanctions were actually implemented by the governor in council. They were never put before Parliament. Parliament has not seen them. We have, for one year now, been asking the government of Canada under the freedom of information to supply the evidence of the grounds. This is a violation of Natural Law. It means that the 40 people that have been targeted under the Magnitsky Act are not even entitled to know the charge against them, let alone the evidence that supports that charge, let alone contest that evidence. This is a flagrant violation of human rights, and it is being done in the name of the Canadian people. I don't think that's the way that the Canadian government should be going forward. The Canadian government should go back to the position that it used to take in the 70's and 60's which is essential that it only gets involved by an independent foreign policy of its own by an intermediary which will assist and by not taking sides on the internal politics of the country. It is saying national sovereignty is a pre-condition of effective relations between national states and that is the ground on which we stand, and 'what we are going to do is talk nation to nation. At the same time, what can be done to help matters is to encourage dialogue.

The more that we do, the more likely it is that there will be a dialogue, and that will lead to the opposition being listened to. If they have a valid point, and if we are acting to encourage dialogue instead of confrontation and overthrow, that will strengthen the sections within the opposition that actually do want dialogue. It will weaken the sections that want to run to the United States of America and ask for regime change or link up with the new president of Brazil, Bolsonaro, if he gets in, or with Colombia, and it will escalate the process of confrontation which is actually beginning to be almost as great a threat to world peace as the process that has been underway in the Middle East.

Battle of Ideas Press

Revolution & Counter Revolution in Venezuela

By Alison Bodine

Writer and researcher on Venezuela. She is a member of the Fire This Time Newspaper Editorial Board and is the coordinator of the Fire This Time Venezuela Solidarity Campaign. Alison Bodine is an electrical designer based in Vancouver, Canada.

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March against U.S. and imperialist intervention. The sign reads "Criminal empire - enough!" - Caracas, Venezuela. April 18, 2018.

Cuban doctors in Brazil

By Lisandra Fariñas Acosta and Daina Caballero Trujillo

It is hard to say if the President-elect of the country, Jair Bolsonaro, has been here, or if he knows where this town is located on the map. It is even more unlikely that he knows the story of María, a humble, young woman, 29 years of age, to whom a Cuban doctor provided relief.

Without the diagnosis of Dr. Reymeri Valderrama Pimentel, she would never have been able to fight the lymphatic filariasisshe suffered, a chronic, very debilitating disease also known as elephantiasis.

"We Cuban doctors who work in this municipality, will never forget María's face, before and after the diagnosis, and those of her family and neighbors, who everyday placed their confidence in us and allowed us to enter their lives, despite the language and cultural barriers, that only love, professionalism, and humility can overcome," said specialist Dr. Valderrama, who gave this testimony at the Central Medical Cooperation Unit in Havana, on the occasion of the 55th anniversary of Cuba's international medical cooperation.

It was in 2012 that the Brazilian Institute of Applied Economic Research (IPEA) announced terrifying findings: doctors were in short supply; waiting times for appointments were long; and the quality of assistance was poor. At that time, the ratio of doctors per inhabitant was 1.8 per 1,000, according to the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBEG), far below other countries on the continent and around the world. Thus the analysis concluded with the proposal to raise this ratio to 2.7 doctors per 1,000 inhabitants.

Considering these statistics, it is evident that the More Doctors program, launched in August of 2013, was an urgent necessity. According to former President Dilma Rousseff, initiator of the effort, the goal was not to bring more foreign doctors to Brazil, but to take health care to the country's interior.

The declaration released by the Cuban Ministry of Public Health, announcing its exit from the program, stated, "The work of Cuban doctors in places of extreme poverty, in the favelas of Río de Janeiro, Sao Paulo, Salvador de Bahía, in the 34 Special Indigenous Districts, especially in Amazonía, was widely recognized by federal, state, and municipal governments of the country, and by the population, who supported their presence at a level of 95%, according to a study which the Brazilian Ministry of Health requested of the Federal University of Minas Gerais."

This reality was emphasized during the 2015 International Health Convention in Cuba, when Arthur Chioro, Brazilian Health Minister at the time, said, "Brazil has an official history of more than 500 years, and this is the first time we have doctors in all indigenous villages. This people, some 800,000 brothers, were never guaranteed access to a health team."

The More Doctors program reached populations in Amazonia, in semi-arid regions, remote rural areas, and the outskirts of large cities, Chioro noted, adding, "Millions of people live in Sao Pablo, and in its periphery, thousands of them have no medical assistance."

Brazilian authorities, the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), and the population expressed their satisfaction with the program many times.

"We are very satisfied because 90% of the Brazilian doctors participating in this experience tell their Brazilian colleagues to come to the program, that it is worthwhile. This environment of success, credibility, and quality, we are morally obliged to share with the Cuban government, the PAHO, and with doctors from 30 countries who also responded to our call and make a contribution to allow Brazil to provide universal health coverage," Chioro said at the gathering.

At the same time, he expressed the necessity of strengthening primary care with the opening of more medical schools and scholarships for residencies, "We are transforming the structure of our health system so that in ten years we have the capacity to provide this program more Brazilian doctors. We always count on the cooperation of Cuba, because we know that this sister people takes a position of great solidarity and commitment with Brazil," he said.

What occurred with the More Doctors program in Brazil went beyond supporting the family health strategy and guaranteeing

primary care. The greatest contribution in this nation, in which Cuban doctors played an exemplary role, was a new way of taking care of the people's health – that of disease prevention, of conceiving the individual as a bio-psycho-social being, not removed from the surrounding environment. Cuban doctors were healing, without neglecting the causes that determine the disease.Dr. Maritza Gómez Hernández told Granma International that she worked three years in Río Grande del Sur, the country's southernmost state, "I worked with another Brazilian doctor and it was a wonderful experience to exchange knowledge, and that professionals from other parts of the world could see our point of view, the way of doing Cuban medicine and why it has prestige," the doctor recalls, arriving in Havana at dawn on November 15, with her mission accomplished, as part of a group of 196 health collaborators who had been in Brazil, working in the More Doctors program.

They landed at José Martí International Airport shortly after the Ministry of Public Health issued its statement announcing the end of Cuban participation in the Brazilian program.

The replacements they were to have will not be available to the Brazilian people, "given the actions of the new President who has not even taken office, but is taking ultra-right measures to place conditions on the medical mission in Brazil, and Cuba will not accept these conditions," Dr. Anabel Mariedo Oropesa told Granma International.

"We return today, as our colleagues will, with all the dignity in the world, leaving behind a beautiful history written by all of us for this people, that so much needs it, and who learned to love Cuba and its doctors," said the specialist who worked in the northeastern state of Tocantis.

"We welcome to the homeland, a bastion of courage and principles, all the doctors and internationalist professionals who completed their mission in Brazil and other countries," said Deputy Minister of Public Health Regla Angulo Pardo, who congratulated the group for their commitment and effort, in the name of the ministry, the Party, and the Cuban people.

For Dr. Lisván Cala Rosabal, the attitude of Bolsonaro "shows that he has no knowledge of the reality of Cuban medicine and that of thousands of Brazilians for whom the More Doctors program allowed access to a right like health care. At the same time, he disregarded the dignity of the Cuban people.

"More Doctors was a great experience that allowed for the reduction of inequality in the Brazilian population and made access to a fundamental right possible, that is to health and life. More than 80% of the primary care doctors, in the municipality where I was placed, are Cuban," said the Comprehensive General Medicine specialist.

And as they listened to the notes of the National Anthem, and were reminded of the explicit support given by doctors to the Revolution, no one could doubt that no conditions can be placed on integrity, health, or life.

THE BRAZILIAN PEOPLE WILL SUFFER THE CONSEQUENCES AND THE WORLD KNOWS IT

"With dignity, great sensitivity, professionalism, dedication, and altruism, Cuban collaborators have provided valuable service to the Brazilian people. Attitudes with such a human dimension must be respected and defended."

These were the words tweeted by Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canel referring to the decision by the Ministry of Public Health to end Cuba's participation in the More Doctors program, in the wake of comments by Brazil's President-elect indicating that he would make changes to the terms under which the program is organized.

In another tweet, he added, "With your heads held high, you are an unsurpassable example of humanism and dignity. Those who vainly think only in themselves cannot understand the essence of our internationalist convictions.

#SomosCuba."

Similar condemnations of the President-elect's position have been made in the Latin American, Brazilian, and international media, and on social media. Brazilian institutions, political figures, intellectuals, movements, and social organizations within and beyond the country have expressed their support for the work done by Cuban doctors over the program's five years.

Gleisi Hoffmann, national president of the Workers' Party (PT), denounced "the disrespect, threats, and violence with which Bolsonaro addresses Cuba, that have led to Brazil losing access to Cuban medicine, recognized by the World Health Organization as an example for the world."

"In some time, with our struggle, we will return to being the country you, Cuban friends, came to know through your contact with our people. And I am sure that Cuba will not fail Brazil, as it has never failed any people of the world in need of Cuban solidarity," said Manuela D'Avila, running mate of Fernando Haddad, the PT candidate for President in recent elections.

D'Avila, a member of the Communist Party of Brazil, described the end of Cuban participation in the More Doctors program as the first tragic victim of the ideological extremism and persecution against the left that is rampant in Brazil today.

Likewise, the President of the Brazilian chapter of the Network of Intellectuals and Artists in Defense of Humanity, writer Marilia Guimaraes, stated that she was greatly pained by the news, saying, "We don't have any way now to change direction. But we have plenty of hope that new possibilities exist. I am very sad for the Brazilian people."

The Landless Movement (MST) and the National Network of People's Doctors referred to the work of Cuban medicine and the human, professional quality of its doctors, emphasizing that they are "an example of what medicine can be for all. An example that favelas and Amazonía can have doctors. An example that the poor and Black can be doctors. An example that the state must guarantee health as a right. An example of Latino love."

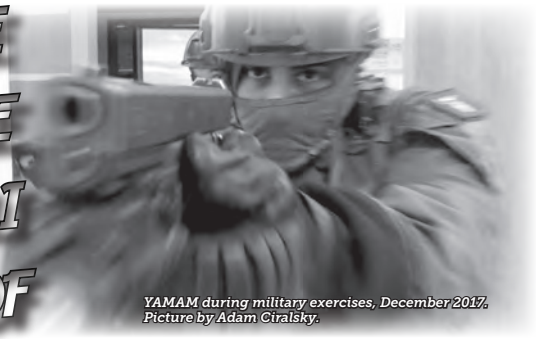
But no doubt, those who will most feel the departure of Cuban doctors are the men and women, the children and elderly, who are indignant over the authoritarian, incoherent position of their future President, and will now be abandoned.

According to statistics from the Brazilian Ministry of Health, the More Doctors program currently has 18,240 posts in 4,058 municipalities. Close to 8,400 of these are occupied by Cubans, distributed over 2,885 municipalities.

More than 1,500 municipalities, the majority with less than 20,000 inhabitants, have only Cuban doctors, because they are located in remote, extremely poor areas, where Brazilian doctors do not want to work.

From: www. en.granma.cu

VOYAGE TO THE ISRAELI HELL OF YAMAM



YAMAM during military exercises, December 2017. Picture by Adam Ciralsky.

By Manuel Yepe

On October 7, the American magazine Vanity Fair was awarded by the Tel Aviv regime with the exclusive right to a story about the Israeli special police force YAMAM. Today it is one of the most sinister anti-terrorist units in the world because its repressive tactics have given it an unarguable prestige. Under the signature of Adam Ciralsky, the publication included on October 7 a report entitled "From inside the most secret antiterrorist operation…". The author relates his arrival at a fortified complex in the Ayalon Valley, between Jerusalem and Tel Aviv where YAMAM is headquartered.

That' where a gang of anti-terrorist operatives, whose work for four decades has been shrouded in impenetrable secrecy. The journalist crossed through a uniformed Israeli border police combat post and entered an explosion-proof shed where his credentials were scanned, his electronic devices locked up, and a counterintelligence officer gave them a warning sermon.

"Don't reveal our location," "don't remember our faces," "forget our names," and "try to forget everything you see," were the basic instructions.

YAMAM is part of Israel's national police. It is not subordinate to the Israeli army or Mossad (Israel's CIA) or Shin Bet (Israel's FBI). Its situation in Israel's organization chart is more like Britain's M.I.5, although recently the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has blurred some of the dividing lines between the tasks of these agencies. YAMAM's main task, according to the hosts, is to thwart terrorist plans, engage with opposing militants during attacks, combat so-called crime syndicates and prevent border incursions.

YAMAM is considered the most qualified agency of its kind in the West to confront a war of espionage. The organization has devised new methodologies to respond to terrorist incidents and mass shootings, which, until now, it only shared with a few of its politically-related counterparts around the world.

At a time when veterans of the so-called Islamic State or ISIS are attacking Western targets outside their strongholds in the Middle East, their expertise is in high demand. Increasingly, the world's top intelligence and police chiefs are turning to YAMAM (the Hebrew acronym for "special police unit").

Yet Israel, which, as an occupying power, faces international condemnation for its unequal war against the Palestinians, boasts that some senior government officials who are very critical of Israel on the world stage have begun to ask them for help with their most intractable security problems.

And now the Israeli regime has evidently felt that the time has come to share its experiences with other countries, for its own benefit of course.

The main objective assigned to YAMAM is to thwart terrorist plans against the government before they occur, to involve the military during attacks, to combat "crime syndicates" and to prevent border incursions. In contrast, the military forces are often called upon to confront protest demonstrations in the West Bank, using what human rights activists call exaggerated force.

But protests along the fence separating Israel from Gaza, said to be organized by Hamas, are met only by Israel Defense Forces (IDF) outside YAMAM. It is these IDF forces that are generally accused of killing unarmed Palestinians, according to Ciralsky

When Hamas sends rockets or balloons carrying weapons to Israel, or when it launches rockets, it is the IDF that responds with devastating air strikes. Occasionally, members of YAMAM participate in these attacks, although to a large extent they play a secondary role. For a year, the author and his team traveled to train and exchange tactics with their U.S., French and German counterparts in areas such as the retaking of passenger trains, frustrating suicide attacks, and disarming men armed with grenades or bombs.

YAMAM's technology includes robots and drones, and dazzles the uninitiated. But so do the statistics: YAMAM performs an average of about 300 missions a year in which its commandos have prevented the explosion of no less than 50 "time bombs" carried by suicide bombers en route to their targets and hundreds of other attacks in early stages.

YAMAM is a lamentable manifestation of the most modern technology designed as part of the Israeli genocide against Palestine, a nation whose people legitimately aspire to their sovereign space.

Manuel E. Yepe, is a lawyer, economist and journalist. He was a professor at the Higher Institute of International Relations in Havana. He was Cuba's ambassador to Romania, general director of the Prensa Latina agency; vice president of the Cuban Institute of Radio and Television; founder and national director of the Technological Information System (TIPS) of the United Nations Program for Development in Cuba, and secretary of the Cuban Movement for the Peace and Sovereignty of the Peoples.

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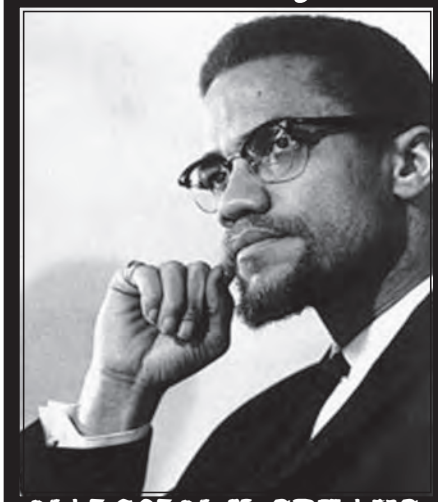
"By Any Means Necessary..."



MALCOLM X SPEAKS

Excerpt from Malcolm X Speech "Not Just an American Problem, But a World Problem", Feb. 16, 1965.

And in order for you and me to know the nature of the struggle that you and I are involved in, we have to know not only the various ingredients involved at the local level and national level, but also the ingredients that are involved at the international level. And the problems of the Black man here in this country today have ceased to be a problem of just the American Negro or an American problem. It has become a problem that is so complex, and has so many implications in it, that you have to study it in its entire world, in the world context or in its international context, to really see it as it actually is. Otherwise you can't even follow the local issue, unless you know what part it plays in the entire international context. And when you look at it in that context, you see it in a different light, but you see it with more clarity.

*** EN ESPAÑOL ***

Viaje al Infierno Israelí de Yamam

Por Manuel Yepe

La revista estadounidense Vanity Fair fue premiada por el régimen de Tel Aviv concediéndole la exclusiva de un relato acerca de la fuerza especial de policía Israelí YAMAM, que es hoy una de las unidades antiterroristas más tenebrosas del mundo porque sus tácticas represivas le han dado un controvertible prestigio.

Con la firma de Adam Ciralsky, la publicación incluyó el 7 de octubre un reportaje titulado "Desde el interior de la operación antiterrorista de más guardado secreto…". El autor relata su llegada a un complejo fortificado en el valle de Ayalon, entre Jerusalén y Tel Aviv donde opera YAMAM, una banda de operativos antiterroristas cuyo trabajo durante cuatro décadas ha estado envuelto en secreto impenetrable. El periodista cruzó por un puesto de policía fronteriza israelí uniformada de combate y entró en un cobertizo a prueba de explosiones donde le escanearon sus credenciales, guardaron bajo llave sus dispositivos electrónicos, y un oficial de contrainteligencia les ofreció un sermón de advertencias.

"No revelen nuestra ubicación", "no retengan nuestras caras", "olviden nuestros nombres" y "traten de olvidarse todo lo que vean", fueron las instrucciones básicas.

YAMAM forma parte de la policía nacional de Israel. No se subordina al ejército ni al Mossad (agencia central de inteligencia), ni al Shin Bet (servicio de seguridad nacional) israelí. Su situación en el organigrama de Israel es más parecida a la del M.I.5 de Gran Bretaña, aunque, recientemente, el conflicto israelí-palestino ha desdibujado algunas de las líneas divisorias entre las tareas de estas agencias. El encargo principal de YAMAM consiste, según los anfitriones, en frustrar planes terroristas, involucrarse con los militantes contrarios durante los ataques, combatir a los llamados sindicatos del crimen e impedir las incursiones en la frontera.

YAMAM se considera la agencia más calificada de su clase en Occidente para enfrentar una guerra de espionaje. La organización ha ideado nuevas metodologías para responder a los incidentes terroristas y tiroteos en masa, que hasta ahora solo compartía con algunos pocos homólogos suyos políticamente afines de todo el mundo. En una época en la que los veteranos del llamado Estado Islámico o ISIS están atacando objetivos occidentales fuera de sus fortalezas en el Oriente Medio, su experiencia es muy demandada. Cada vez más, los más altos jefes de inteligencia y de policía del mundo recurren a YAMAM (acrónimo hebreo que significa "unidad especial de policía").

Sin embargo Israel, que como potencia ocupante enfrenta una condena internacional por su guerra desigual contra los palestinos, alardea de que algunos altos funcionarios de gobiernos que son muy críticos de Israel en el escenario mundial han comenzado a solicitar de ellos ayuda para sus problemas de seguridad más intratables. Y el régimen israelí, evidentemente, han sentido que ha llegado la hora de compartir esas experiencias suyas con otros países, claro que en su beneficio propio.

El objetivo principal asignado a YAMAM es el de frustrar planes terroristas contra el gobierno prematuramente, involucrar en ello a los militares durante los ataques, combatir a los "sindicatos del crimen" e impedir las incursiones en la frontera. En contraste, fuerzas militares a menudo son llamados a hacer frente a las manifestaciones de protesta en Cisjordania, utilizando lo que los activistas de derechos humanos califican de una fuerza exagerada. Pero ante protestas a lo largo de la valla que separa a Israel de Gaza, cuya organización se atribuye a Hamás solo son utilizadas Fuerzas de Defensa de Israel (IDF, por sus siglas en inglés) ajenas a YAMAM. Son estas fuerzas de IDF las que generalmente son acusadas de dar muerte a palestinos desarmados, según Ciralsky,

Cuando Hamás envía cometas o globos transportando armas a Israel, o cuando realiza lanzamientos de cohetes, es el IDF el que responde con devastadores ataques aéreos. En ellos participan ocasionalmente miembros del YAMAM, aunque en buena medida desempeñando un papel secundario.

Durante un año, el autor del trabajo periodístico y su equipo viajaron a entrenarse e intercambiar tácticas con sus homólogos estadounidenses, franceses y alemanes, en aspectos como la retoma de trenes de pasajeros, la frustración de ataques suicidas y el desarme de hombres armados con granadas o bombas.

La tecnología de YAMAM incluye robots y drones, y deslumbra a los no iniciados. Pero también lo hacen las estadísticas: YAMAM realiza un promedio de unas 300 misiones al año en las que sus comandos han impedido la explosión de no menos de 50 "bombas de relojería" portadas por suicidas en ruta hacia sus objetivos y cientos de otros ataques en etapas tempranas.

YAMAM es una manifestación lamentable de la más moderna tecnología diseñada en función del genocidio contra Palestina, una nación cuyo pueblo aspira legítimamente a su espacio soberano.

Manuel E. Yepe Menendez es periodista y se desempeña como Profesor adjunto en el Instituto Superior de las Relaciones Internacionales de La Habana.

www.manuelyepe.wordpress.com

OUR HERITAGE

Rosa Luxemburg

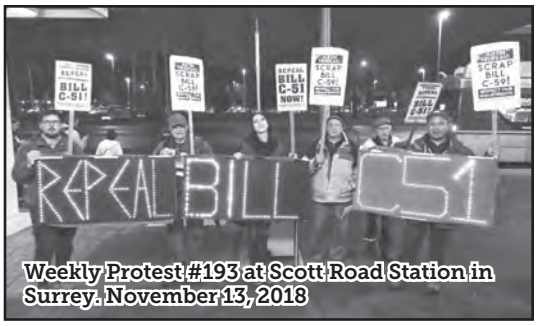
Revolutionary Marxist Leader
1871-1919

Certainly not merely in the fact that the bourgeois apostles of peace are relying on the influence of fine words, while we do not depend on words alone. Our very points of departure are diametrically opposed: the friends of peace in bourgeois circles believe that world peace and disarmament can be realised within the framework of the present social order, whereas we, who base ourselves on the materialistic conception of history and on scientific socialism, are convinced that militarism can only be abolished from the world with the destruction of the capitalist class state.

Excerpt from her writings "Peace Utopia (1911)".

HOW IS DEMOCRACY IN CANADA UNDER CAPITALIST RULE?

FIGHTING AGAINST UNDEMOCRATIC AND SUPPRESSIVE BILLS C-51 AND C-59 CONTINUES



Weekly Protest #193 at Scott Road Station in Surrey. November 13, 2018

By Thomas Davies

Its has been over three years since "Anti-Terrorism Act" Bill C-51 was passed in the Canadian parliament. Its sweeping attacks on our rights to privacy, free speech, assembly and overall due process were justified by then-Prime Minister Stephen Harper as being necessary to protect people in Canada from "jihadist extremists."

Current Liberal Prime Minister Justin Trudeau was elected on a promise to "fix" Bill C-51. However, his Bill C-59 keeps many of the worst violations while promising that new "oversight" mechanisms will ensure that the massive powers given to government agencies, police and spy agencies will not be abused. This "diet coke" version of the original law has been sitting in the Senate for the past six months while they decide whether or not to give it final approval.

Fire This Time participates in Vancouver protest. April 18, 2015

Trudeau's government also continues to use the same Harper-era boogie-man Islamophobic accusations to justify continuing these attacks. Their "2017 Public Report on the Terrorist Threat to Canada" emphasizes, with zero evidence sited, that "the principal terrorist threat to Canada continues to be that posed by violent extremists who are inspired by violent Islamist ideology."

In the meantime, Canada has faced a terrorist attack, just not one that fits the government fear narrative. The newest edition of the Global Terrorism Index found that "Canada experienced six terror-related deaths in 2017, all of which were the result of an armed assault at the Islamic Cultural Centre of Quebec City by a right-wing extremist."

Meanwhile, Conservative MP Tony Clement was forced to resign from all parliamentary committees after it was revealed he was sending sexually explicit images and video to someone who tried to extort money from him. He had been a member of the much-acclaimed National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians, the new special panel of MPs and senators designed supposedly to provide real oversight of agencies with a role in national security, including CSIS, the Communications Security Establishment and the RCMP.

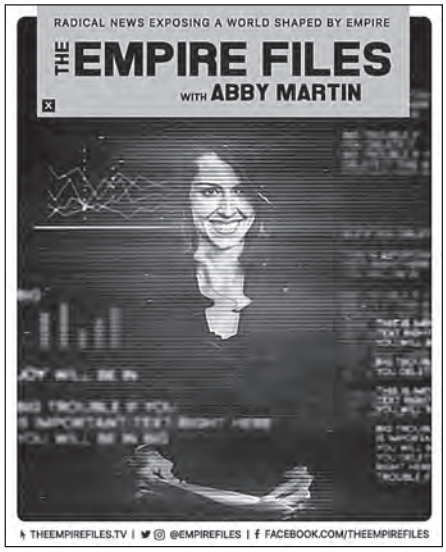
A chair of the previous National Security oversight committee, Dr. Arthur Porter, quit and was charged in 2013 with accepting a $22.5-million bribe in connection with the construction contract won by SNC-Lavalin for the $1.3-billion McGill University Health Centre in Montreal.

These are the people we are asked time and time again to trust with extraordinary powers to violate our human and democratic rights? To say they exercise poor judgement is an extreme understatement.

Meanwhile, the Working Group to Stop Bill C-51 in Vancouver continues its ongoing weekly campaign of picket and petition drives demanding, "Repeal Bill C-51!" and "Scrap Bill C-59!" November saw four more actions in Vancouver, as well as the growing suburbs of Surrey and New Westminster. The winter rains and darkness have not slowed down the campaign, which is still finding new locations to continue collecting signatures and discussing directly with the public. Distrust of the government remains very high, and the challenge remains to mobilize this discontent into an effective campaign to defend and extend our human and democratic rights. The Working Group to Stop Bill C-51 remains committed to this important work!

Repeal Bill C-51!
Scrap Bill C-59!
Our Security Lies in Defending the Rights of All!

Follow Thomas on Twitter:@thomasdavies59



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Continued from page 7

"Saudi Arabia", who is the one bombing Yemen. I think this point is really important because by labelling all the resistance to Saudi Arabia's aggression in Yemen as "Iranian puppets," the media is vilifying and dismissing anybody in Yemen that resists, that speaks out against Saudi Arabia. This also helps the Saudi government to justify their atrocities committed in Yemen.

I want to refer to a tweet on November 28 by U.S. Secretary of State Pompeo, "Iran's regime has no interest in easing Yemeni suffering; the mullahs don't even care for ordinary Iranians. Saudi Arabia has invested billions to relieve suffering in #Yemen. Iran has invested zero." It seems that Mr. Pompeo thinks people are fools! I want to point out one of many responses people have posted challenging Pompeo; it is a tweet from Ahmad Algohbary, a Yemeni freelance journalist based in the capital Sana'a. In his response to Pompeo Ahmad said:
"#Iran is not refuelling #Saudi warplanes.
#Iran is not providing intelligence to the #Saudi.
#Iran is not selling arms to #Saudis to kill civilians in #Yemen.
#Iran is not building its economy by killing innocents in Yemen.
#US is doing all these horrible things in Yemen."

And then he went on and tweeted another response to Secretary Pompeo: "How dare you! You are blaming #Iran while your bombs killed children in their school bus in #Saada. #Yemen." Ahmad clearly showed the hypocrisy of the United States. Saudi Arabia can't continue the war for one more day without the support of the U.S., and then they're trying to fool us that it's Iran's fault, not Saudi Arabia, not the United States.

However, sometimes even the mainstream imperialist media out of necessity and concern exposes their own ruling class lies. In an article published by the Washington Post in 2016 titled "No, Yemen's Houthis actually aren't Iranian puppets" the author states that, "Tehran's support for the Houthis is limited, and its influence in Yemen is marginal. It is simply inaccurate to claim that the Houthis are Iranian proxies."

The Fight for Peace in Yemen

Almost four years of war now, anybody can see that there is no peace in Yemen. More than 56,000 people have been killed according to new counts by the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED). Yemen is the world's worst humanitarian crisis and the United States government, and their imperialist allies are responsible for it.

The opposition to the war in Yemen worldwide is growing significantly. I am a member of a WhatsApp group with over 60 social justice and human rights activists around the world that have been organizing in their respective countries against the war on Yemen. Almost every day I receive articles, photos, and videos from events around the world in solidarity with the Yemeni people. I want to name some of the cities where there were actions against the war in Yemen just in the last week: here in Vancouver, in Toronto, Rhode Island, Nevada, New York, New Jersey, Maine, Illinois, D.C., London and Stockholm. There was also protest earlier this morning in Baghdad, Tunisia, Buenos Aires, Argentina where currently the G20 meeting is being held, and Trump and Saudi Crown Prince MBS are attending.

And I want to end up on showing you this little brochure that Mobilization Against War and Occupation created, which contains some facts and an infographic about the war on Yemen. It is based on an article that I wrote last month on the war on Yemen. We have a lot of copies in the back. Alison is passing some around. So please take more than one, give them to a friend, put them at your favourite coffee shops, in the library. It is a good way to get people to know more about the war in Yemen. Hopefully, with broad information and education, people will join us in opposing the war, occupation and bloodshed in Yemen.

Follow Azza on Twitter: @Azza_R14

The World Protests the War on Yemen

Vancouver, Canada

Milwaukee, U.S.

London, UK

New York, U.S.

Tunis, Tunisia

Continued from page 4

"We are here today to send Justin Trudeau a message that workers do not want legislation. We want our rights protected, and we want the right to bargain with our employer freely."
– Emily, a postal worker in Fraser Valley West.

"I am here because the back to work legislation is fundamentally wrong and illegal."
– Sarah, a letter carrier in Surrey.

"I see this as not just a fight for postal workers, but all workers rights, including collective bargaining. Things that are in our Charter of Rights and Freedoms."
– Norine, letter carrier.

Postal workers and allies protesting in front of Liberal MP Ralph Goodale's office in Regina, SK.

Fire This Time: What are your thoughts on the back-to-work legislation?

"We are going to have to change it. It is a criminal act, and we are going to prove that with time. People are going to support us more and more and more here. You watch what happens down the road, just you watch. Just saying."
– Raymond, a forcibly retired letter carrier, on a medical retirement.

"I want to say BS! It is unfair, it is unjust, and we as the workers in Canada deserve the right to bargain freely. We should have never been legislated back. The first chance that Justin Trudeau had he used it, and it is not right. We are standing up; we are fighting back."
– Emily, a postal worker in Fraser Valley West.

"There was no incentive for the corporation to negotiate, and if you keep legislating us back, there never will be. It is not just us; it is other unions that face the same issue."
– Norine, letter carrier.

CUPW members occupied the community office of the Minister of Environment Catherine McKenna in Ottawa, ON.

Fire This Time: What do you hope to see in the next few weeks?

"We are going to keep the fight going. We have rallies, we have community pickets happening, and we are just going to continue to bombard with our thoughts on this issue."
– Emily, a postal worker in Fraser Valley West.

"A groundswell of all the unions across Canada getting together and forcing some change."
– Sarah, a letter carrier in Surrey.

"I would like to see this keep up. I would like to see more awareness about what is going on with trade deals, and there is so much involved that affects everybody. People should look at the history of unions and what they originally stood for and fought for. We could easily go back to those."
– Norine, letter carrier.

SUPPORT POSTAL WORKERS

Follow Alison on Twitter: @Alisoncolette

VETERANS FOR PEACE

Your Commander-in-Chief Is Lying to You

To All Active Duty Soldiers:

Your Commander-in-chief is lying to you. You should refuse his orders to deploy to the southern U.S. border should you be called to do so. Despite what Trump and his administration are saying, the migrants moving North towards the U.S. are not a threat. These small numbers of people are escaping intense violence. In fact, much of the reason these men and women—with families just like yours and ours—are fleeing their homes is because of the US meddling in their country's elections. Look no further than Honduras, where the Obama administration supported the overthrow of a democratically elected president who was then replaced by a repressive dictator.

These extremely poor and vulnerable people are desperate for peace. Who among us would walk a thousand miles with only the clothes on our back without great cause? The odds are good that your parents, grandparents, great-grandparents, etc. lived similar experiences to these migrants. Your family members came to the U.S. to seek a better life—some fled violence. Consider this as you are asked to confront these unarmed men, women and children from Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador. To do so would be the ultimate hypocrisy.

The U.S. is the richest country in the world, in part because it has exploited countries in Latin America for decades. If you treat people from these countries like criminals, as Trump hopes you will, you only contribute to the legacy of pillage and plunder beneath our southern border. We need to confront this history together, we need to confront the reality of America's wealth and both share and give it back with these people. Above all else, we cannot turn them away at our door. They will die if we do.

By every moral or ethical standard it is your duty to refuse orders to "defend" the U.S. from these migrants. History will look kindly upon you if you do. There are tens of thousands of us who will support your decision to lay your weapons down. You are better than your Commander-in-chief. Our only advice is to resist in groups. Organize with your fellow soldiers. Do not go this alone. It is much harder to punish the many than the few.

In solidarity,
Rory Fanning
Former U.S. Army Ranger, War-Resister
Spenser Rapone
Former U.S. Army Ranger and Infantry Officer, War-Resister
Members of Veterans for Peace
From: www.commondreams.org

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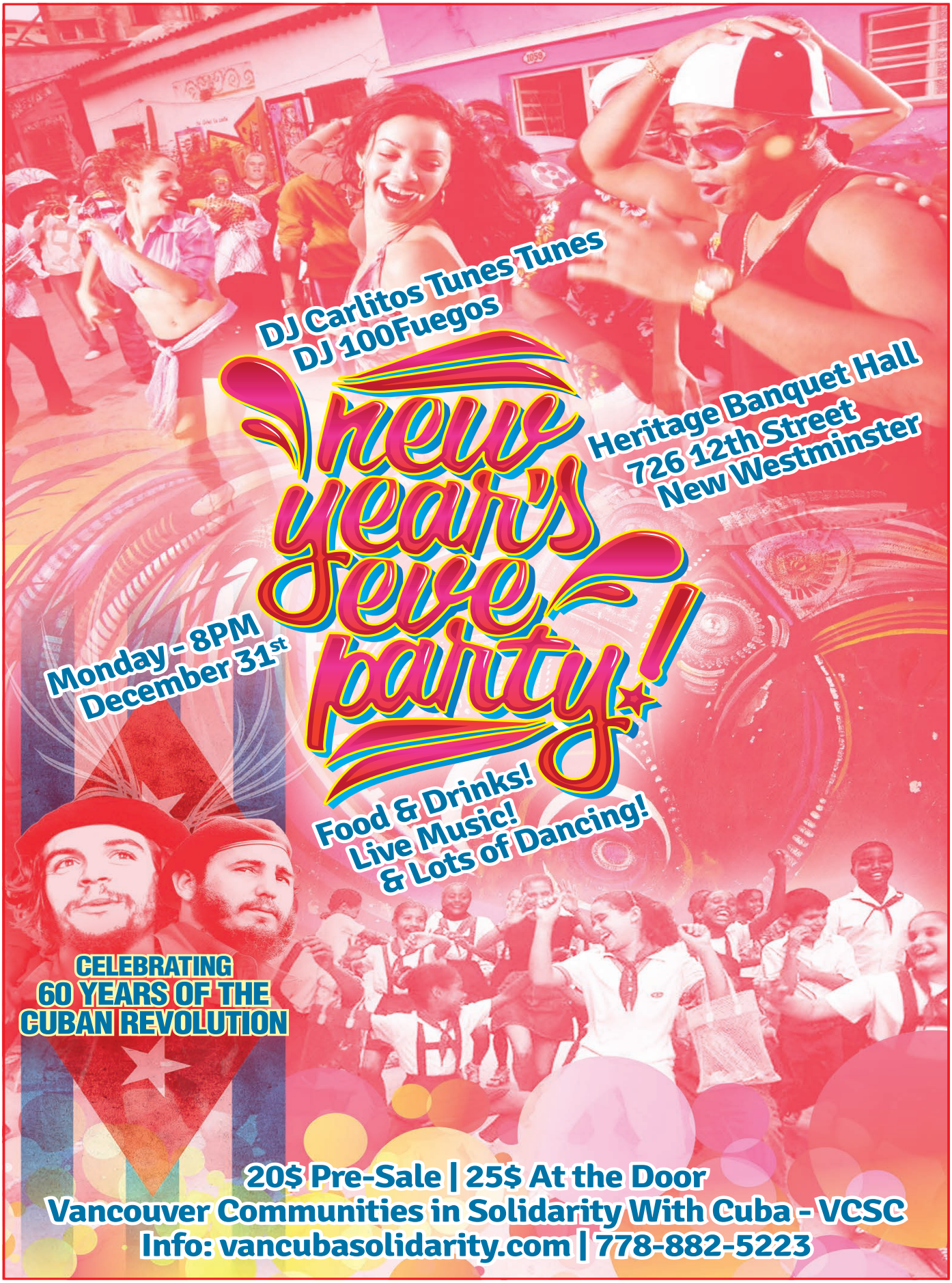
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